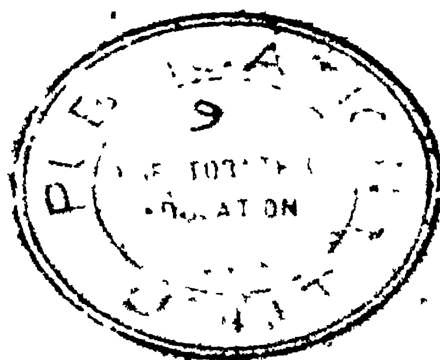
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PURNEA



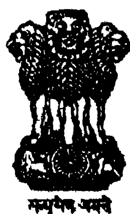
Bihar District Gazetteers

PURNEA

By

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P R E F A C E

The first *District Gazetteer of Purnea* by L. S. S. O'Malley, I.C.S., was published in 1911.

The State Government of Bihar in the Revenue Department have undertaken the work of re-writing and publishing District Gazetteers. In the last few decades there had been very many basic changes in the district and the country. The old series of District Gazetteers had a very limited objective and were meant more or less to be the administrators' handbook. With the independence of the country the very character of the State Government has changed. The old *District Gazetteer of Purnea* even if available is of little use now.

The Ministry of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs has recently taken up the work of publishing four Central volumes for India (in place of the Old Imperial Gazetteers) and in consultation with the State Governments has drawn up a general plan to be followed as far as possible by the States for their District Gazetteers. The State Government of Bihar have agreed to work in collaboration with the Ministry of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs.

This re-written *District Gazetteer of Purnea* is my 10th publication in the new series. The re-written District Gazetteers of Hazaribagh, Muzaffarpur, Gaya, Singhbhum, Saran, Champaran, Monghyr, Palamau and Bhagalpur have already been published. In the last three we have followed India's plan.

The work of re-writing the *District Gazetteer of Purnea* has its own difficulties. Although there have been recently Survey and Settlement Operations, the Final Report has not yet been published. No comprehensive socio-economic survey of the district has been undertaken. Portions of the district have gone over to West Bengal in implementation of the recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission. The Annual Administrative Reports are not always published now. The march of events has been extremely rapid in the last three decades and the very face of the district has been changed. Officers in key positions have their own problems which leave them little leisure to give active collaboration in a task of this type.

In my task of re-writing the *District Gazetteer of Purnea* I have been immensely profited by my long association with the

district. I was posted to the district in 1933. Since then I have had the opportunity of re-visiting the district in various official capacity. Some of the older generation who are permanent residents of Purnea like Raja P. C. Lal of Nazarganj, Mr. Satkari Dey, Advocate, the late Mr. Johnstone, H. M. Weatherall, etc., have helped me considerably in my work. Old Records in Purnea Collectorate were looked into by me and some of the materials collected on them were utilised. Institutions like National Archives, New Delhi, National Library, Calcutta, Asiatic Society of Bengal have continued giving me their valuable help as before. They have ungrudgingly allowed me loan of rare books and study in their Archives. For the later events I have had help from various books, Census reports, manuscripts and data collected from collaborators, personal investigations and research.

It is only by the pooling of resources, personal contacts, extensive tours, observation and study that a book of this type could be compiled. I am particularly grateful to Pandit Binodanand Jha, Chief Minister of Bihar, Shri Mahesh Prasad Sinha, Revenue Minister, and Shri S. J Mazumdar, I.C.S., Chief Secretary. They have always taken keen interest in this work and have given me all possible help and encouragement. My thanks are due to the Central Gazetteer Unit in the Ministry of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs for giving some valuable suggestions on the texts. Shri Bhola Shastri, Minister in the Bihar Government comes from Purnea district and the Editor had some very helpful discussions with him.

I have tried to provide an objective book for a wide range of readers, politicians, writers, scholars, administrators, tourists and by no means the least, the interested man in the street. It will be a privilege if the book is of some help to the readers of the present and coming generation.

PATNA:
The 1st October 1962

P. C. ROY CHAUDHURY.

PLAN OF CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION.

Purnea district, as at present (1960) constituted, is roughly a square in shape, of which the side is about sixty-six miles. It is bounded on the north by Nepal and part of Darjeeling district of West Bengal; on the east by the districts of West Dinajpur and Malda of West Bengal, on the south by the districts of Bhagalpur, Santhal Parganas and Maldah (West Bengal) and on the west by Saharsa. It is the most easterly district of the State. Before States Reorganisation in India (1956). Purnea was contiguous to East Pakistan.

Purnea forms the north-eastern portion of the Bhagalpur Division, being situated between 20° 15′ and 20° 35′ north latitude and between 87° 0′ and 88° 32′ east longitude.

The population of the district as at the census of 1901 was 18,74,794 and the population at the census of 1951 was 25,25,231, there being an increase of 6,50,437 people since 1901. The reasons for this heavy growth in the population are partly the influx of the displaced persons from the East Bengal (East Pakistan) and partly the changes in the geological conditions of the district, the changes in the beds of rivers Kosi and Kankai and the old beds now coming under cultivation and being inhabitable. But as an effect of the transfer of six thanas from the district to West Bengal on the 1st November, 1956, as a result of the States Reorganisation, viz., Karandighi, Kishanganj, Golpokhar, Islampur, Chopra and Thakurganj, the population has decreased to 22,47,943, there being a transfer of 2,77,288 people. Details of the transfer of an area of 759 square miles are given later.

The last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* district was published in 1911 being compiled by Mr. L. S. S. O'Malley. In 1912 Bihar and Orissa were carved as a separate province out of the old Bengal Province, and Purnea became a district of the new provincial unit. The area mentioned in the old District Gazetteer

of 1911 was 4,994 square miles, but as an effect of the transfer of 759 square miles the present area of the district is 4,239 square miles. The slight difference may be ignored.

FORMATION OF THE DISTRICT.

Buchanan Hamilton, the first historio-geographer of India, visited Purnea in 1809-10 and has left us a good account of his travels. His memoirs were published by the Bihar and Orissa Research Society in 1928 and form a good source book. Buchanan, however, did not give details of local administration.

The district took its present form about 1813, when Malda district was first established. In 1869 a transfer was made to Bhagalpur of parts of *Parganas* Harawat and Dhaphar.

A very rare book "Statistics of the Lower Provinces of Bengal, for 1868-69" printed at the Bengal Secretariat Press was published in 1872 as Board's Return no. 41B. It will be interesting to take some facts and figures from this book in order to show some of the features of Purnea district at that time.

The boundaries according to this book of Purnea district were on the north by Subtree Morung and British Sikim, east by Rungpore, Dinagepore and Maldah, south by Ganges and West by Bhaugulpore.

The most recent survey was Thakbust and Revenue from 1840 to 1847 and the Ganges frontage was re-surveyed under Act IX of 1847 in 1856-57. The total area in square miles was as follows :—

	Cultivated	3,841
Waste	Culturable	635
	Unculturable	742
		5,218

The mileages of communications according to this Return were as follows :—

Water, Rivers 660 miles; Canal none, 1st class roads 100 as against 634 miles of 2nd class roads. The mileage of 3rd class roads was not ascertained. Against Rail Roads a nil return was shown.

The course of the rivers Ganges (Ganga) through this district was reported to be 56 miles, Kosi 104 miles, Kari Kosi 32 miles, Mahananda and other tributaries about 336 miles. It was further mentioned that numerous small tributaries to the above rivers were in the aggregate of about 1,000 miles long.

Another important feature brought out in this book was the large number of marshes covering considerable areas in the district. The marshes were mentioned as : Bhandartal (500 acres), Balda Batee (100 acres), Bhanga Sheikpore (300 acres). Burbatta (uncertain), Doorea (uncertain), Darway (200 acres), Kosrail (700 acres), Mateeari (150 acres), Pipra (2,000 acres), Ramaee (400 acres), Shahbazpore (500 acres).

The area of the district according to this book was 5,218 square miles and the population 9,51,874 and the number of Judicial and Revenue subdivisions was 2. The chief towns with the population were Purnea (11,108), Kishengunge (3,673), Raneegunge (population unknown), Cusbah (unknown).

The number of villages was 4,908 and the density of population per square mile was 181. Out of the population of 9,51,874 souls, agriculturists were 6,34,582 while non-agriculturists were 3,17,291. The prevailing languages were reported to be Hindi and Urdu. The staple products were rice, jute, gram, barley, *jowar, janira,* wheat, mustard and tobacco.

The inhabitants of Purneah were described as weak and devoid of stamina owing to the malarious climate. They were, nevertheless, prolific and rather indifferent to education not unusually litigious, well disposed to constituted authority, and remarkably well behaved. A particular mention was made that serious affrays were almost unknown. Details of Fiscal Survey given in this book will be treated elsewhere.

It may be mentioned here that the total area assessed was 32,21,760 out of which unirrigated area was 24,52,240, culturable 4,06,400 and unculturable waste 4,74,880. The gross amount assessed was Rs. 12,35,138. The rate of assessment per acre on cultivation was 8 to 7 annas, on culturable land 2 to 12 annas and the rate per acre on total areas of settlement was rupee 1.

The next important authoritative source book is *Hunter's Statistical Report* of this district published in 1877. According to Hunter the population of the district was 17,14,495 souls as

* The old spellings are retained in this digest (P.C.R.C.).

ascertained by the census of 1872, and covered a total area, as returned by the Boundary-Commissioner in 1875, of 4,957 square miles. According to the statistical return forwarded by the Collector to the Board of Revenue in 1870-71, the total cultivated area of Purnea was estimated at 23,15,910 acres; the uncultivated area capable of cultivation at 2,85,440 acres, and the uncultivable waste at 5,71,029 acres.

The Final Report of the Survey and Settlement Operations in the district of Purnea (1901—1908) gives us a clear picture of the district at the close of the nineteenth century. The following table reproduced from this Final Report of the Survey and Settlement Operations gives the administrative divisions into which the district was divided at the time of the last Settlement :—

Subdivision.	Thana.	Area (in sq. miles)	Inhabitants per sq. mile (1901)
Araria	Forbesganj	376	313
	Raniganj	270	322
	Araria	431	466
Total of the subdivision		1,077	387
Kishanganj	Bahadurganj	393	517
	Islampur	626	425
	Kishanganj	327	559
Total of the subdivision		1,346	460
Sadar	Dhamdaha	520	278
	Korha	421	260
	Purnea	424	368
	Kasba Amour	279	427
	Gopalpur	323	242
	Kadwa	365	364
	Saifganj	239	411
Total of the subdivision		2,571	326
District total		4,994	375

Changes since the last Settlement.

As the midstream of the river Ganga is the inter-district boundary between the district of Purnea on the one hand and Bhagalpur and Santhal Parganas, on the other, a number of villages in the Ganga *Diara*, to the south of the district, have been transferred from time to time, from one district to the other according as they came out on the right or left bank of the river.

In notification no. 6711-11-J.R., dated the 26th June, 1930, the following villages were transferred from Manihari, Revenue Thana Katihar to P.-S. Sahebganj, district Santhal Parganas :—

Thana nos. 325 to 328, 334/2, 334/4, 334/5 334/6, 335 and 341.

In notification no. 10087-11-J. 8-33-R, dated 30th October. 1933, thana nos. 323 and 324 were transferred from Revenue Thana Katihar, P.-S. Manihari to P.-S. Pirpainti, Revenue Thana Colgong, district Bhagalpur.

Thana no. 323|363 of Revenue Thana Katihar, P.-S. Manihari was transferred to P.-S. Sahebganj, district Santhal Parganas in Government notification no. 10087-11-8-33-R, dated 30th October, 1933. Part of this village was re-transferred to P.-S. Manihari, Revenue Thana Katihar, district Purnea by notification no. 7495-11-J-161-36, dated 20th August, 1936. By the same notification thana no. 346 and parts of 345 and 341 were transferred to P.-S. Manihari, Revenue Thana Katihar, district Purnea.

In notification no. 784-11-J-4/34-R.R., dated 20th June, 1934, Gopalpur *Diara* Revenue Survey no. 5, and Maheshpur *Diara* Revenue Survey no. 6 have been transferred to P.-S. Manihari, Revenue Thana Katihar.

In notification nos. 2093-11-J-153-R., and 10086-11-J-833-R., dated 25th February, 1932 and 30th October, 1933, respectively villages bearing thana nos. 310 to 312 and 314 to 327 were transferred from Revenue Thana Korha, district Purnea, to Revenue Thana Colgong, district Bhagalpur.

Transfer of a portion of the district to West Bengal.

At the time of the partition of India in 1947, parts of the districts of Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri in the old Province of Bengal were allotted to East Pakistan with the result that the new State

of West Bengal was severed into two separate physical parts. The West Bengal Government pleaded for the transfer of the eastern parts of the Purnea district to West Bengal so that physical contiguity between the two parts of West Bengal might be established, and further, so that at least the whole length of the National Highway might lie entirely within the territories of West Bengal.

The States Reorganisation Commission considered the claim of the West Bengal Government and recommended :—

> "Taking all relevant factors into consideration, we propose that
>
> (1) the portion of the Kishanganj subdivision which is to the east of the river Mahananda, and
>
> (2) a portion of the Gopalpur Revenue thana contiguous to the territory mentioned in (1) and extending down to the National Highway in this thana
>
> should be transferred to West Bengal.
>
> The actual delimitation of the new boundary will have to be settled after a detailed survey. The details of this transfer will have to be left, therefore, to the Government of India, acting in consultation with the State Governments concerned, but it should be ensured that control of the National Highway in the Gopalpur Revenue Thana is vested in the Government of West Bengal."

It was, however, discovered soon after the publication of the report of the States Reorganisation Commission that their recommendation would neither establish contiguity between the two parts of West Bengal, nor include the entire highway in the territory of West Bengal. The matter was again considered afresh and it was decided that the new boundary line should be demarcated in the Gopalpur Thana and the Kishanganj subdivision of the Purnea district entirely with reference to the National Highway so that the highway and the area through which it runs may be clearly transferred to West Bengal. An exception was made in respect of the Kishanganj town itself which was to remain in Bihar. Section 3 of the Bihar and West Bengal (Transfer of

Territories) Act, 1956 which lays down the manner in which this boundary shall be demarcated, is reproduced below :—

"3. (1) As from the appointed day, there shall be added to the State of West Bengal the territories which on the 1st day of March, 1956, were comprised in—

(*a*) that portion of Kishanganj subdivision of Purnea district which lies to the east of the boundary line demarcated in accordance with the provisions of sub-section (2) by an authority appointed in this behalf by the Central Government and that portion of Gopalpur Thana of the said district which lies to the east or north, as the case may be, of the said boundary line; and

(*b*) * * * *

and the said territories shall thereafter cease to form part of the State of Bihar.

(2) The boundary line referred to in sub-section (1) shall be so demarcated as to be generally two hundred yards to the west of the highway in Purnea district connecting Dalkola, Kishanganj, and Chopra with Siliguri in Darjeeling district and two hundred yards to the south or south-west of the highway in Purnea district connecting Dalkola and Karandighi with Raiganj in West Dinajpur district :

Provided that the boundary line shall be so demarcated as not to cut across any village or town :

Provided further that from the point where the first mentioned highway meets the southern boundary of that Municipality the boundary line shall be the same as the boundary of the Municipality in the east."

By a *Gazette of India* notification no. 12|3|56 SR-1, dated the 7th September, 1956, Shri V. Vishwanathan, I. C. S., was appointed Special Commissioner for demarcating the boundary line in accordance with the provisions of the Bihar and West Bengal (Transfer of Territories) Act, 1956. The Government of

Bihar deputed Shri T. P. Singh, I. C. S., Commissioner of Bhagalpur Division, Shri R. S. Pande, I. A.S., Joint Development Commissioner and Shri K. K. Mitra, I. A. S., Director of Land Records and Surveys to assist the Special Commissioner. Shri Vishwanathan completed the demarcation work and submitted his report to the Government of India on the 7th October, 1956.

The following statement reproduced from Shri Vishwanathan's report shows the area and the population of the Purnea district transferred to West Bengal :—

Serial no.	Name of Revenue Thana.	Name of Police-Station.	No. of villages.	Area in sq. miles.	Population (1951 Census).
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Islampur	Thakurganj	12	58	14,357
		Chopra	129	158	52,999
		Islampur	123	139	59,652
2	Kishanganj	Kishanganj	285	180	66,810
		Goalpokhar	95	73	36,028
3	Gopalpur	Karandighi	269	151	47,492
		Total .	913	759	2,77,288

The area was transferred from the district of Purnea to West Bengal with effect from 1st November, 1958.

As the demarcation was done before the final publication of the records the maps prepared during the last Settlement continued to be the official maps. Shri Vishwanathan, however, freely consulted the new maps prepared during the present Survey and found them extremely useful. An extract from paragraph 20 of his report is reproduced below · "There have been some changes in the alignment of the road between Raiganj to Dalkola and from Dalkola to Kishanganj. The changes in the alignment

were carefully checked up with reference to the old village maps For a re-check of these changes in alignment the new Survey maps were extremely useful, as though they are not yet official or authoritative, they represent the result of very careful and accurate survey. These new drawings of village maps were particularly useful in checking up on the alignment on the new road from Chopra to Chitalgahatta and to the West Bengal border near Siliguri "

CHANGES IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS SINCE THE LAST SETTLEMENT

In notification no 5886 11 J 15–R, dated the 15th July, 1931, 92 villages bearing thana numbers 376, 378, 380 to 425, 449, 450, 452 to 458, 460 to 473 and 493 to 511, of Revenue Thana Gopalpur were transferred to Revenue Thana Kadwa and numbered 633 to 723 in that Revenue thana

The Sadar subdivision was split up into two subdivisions, Katihar with Revenue Thanas Katihar (Saifganj), Korha, Gopalpur and Kadwa, and Sadar with Revenue Thanas Purnea, Dhamdaha and Amnour The new subdivision of Katihar created in notification no A/J1–1010/54-PG/24, dated 24th April 1954, started its separate existence from 1st May 1954

The transfer of a portion of the district to West Bengal under the Bihar and West Bengal (Transfer of Territories) Act, 1956 necessitated adjustments in the boundaries of a number of police stations in Kishanganj and Katihar subdivisions The revised jurisdiction of Thakurganj police station excluding the portion of the police station transferred to West Bengal was notified in Government of Bihar, Political Department (Police Branch) notification no I/P4-1083/56 PP–6165, dated the 1st November, 1956 Police-station Islampur was abolished and a new police station was created at Pothia in notification no I/P4 1081/56 PP/6141, dated the 31st October, 1956, comprising the portions of the old police-stations Islampur and Chopra left in the district The entire Gopalpur police station was transferred to West Bengal The revised jurisdiction of the Kishanganj P-S was notified in notification no. I|P4-1083|56-PP|6163, dated the 1st November, 1956, with the portion of the police station left in the district Police station Karandighi was abolished, and a new police-station was created at Bahrampur, in notification no I|P4-1082/56-PP–6143, dated the 31st October, 1956, comprising the portion of old police-station Karandighi left in the district

Administrative Division of the District.

The Administrative divisions into which the district is divided in 1957 are given in the table below :—

Subdivision.	Revenue thana.	Police-station.	Area in Sq. miles.	Inhabitants total (1951).
1	2	3	4	5.
Araria ..	(1) Araria ..	(i) Araria ..	231	1,46,020
		(ii) Palasi ..	144	49,061
		(iii) Sikti ..	56	31,801
		Total of the thana	431	2,26,882
	(2) Forbesganj ..	(i) Forbesganj	258	1,15,724
		(ii) Narpatganj	118	78,180
		Total of the thana	376	1,93,904
	(3) Raniganj ..	Raniganj ..	252	1,16,814
		Total of the thana	252	1,16,814
		Total of the Subdivision	1,059	5,37,600
Kishanganj ..	(1) Kishanganj ..	Kishanganj ..	61	35,905
		Total of the thana	61	35,905
	(2) Bahadurganj ..	(i) Bahadurganj	256	1,26,302
		(ii) Dighalbank	111	34,223
		(iii) Terhagach	71	33,642
		Total of the thana	438	1,94,167
	(3) Islampur ..	(i) Pothia ..	152	62,157
		(ii) Thakurganj	174	64,326
		Total of the thana	326	1,26,483
		Total of the Subdivision	825	3,56,555

Subdivision.	Revenue thana.	Police-station.	Area in Sq. miles.	Inhabitants total (1951).
1	2	3	4	5
Katihar	.. (1) Katihar	.. (i) Katihar ..	191	1,47,731
		(ii) Manihari ..	165	1,01,424
		Total of the thana	356	2,49,155
	(2) Korha	.. (i) Korha .	223	1,01,592
		(ii) Barari ..	198	93,133
		Total of the thana	421	1,94,725
	(3) Kodwa	.. (i) Kodwa ..	133	76,045
		(ii) Barsoi ..	134	71,408
		(iii) Azamnagar	136	72,584
		Total of the thana	403	4,14,762
	(4) Gopalpur	.. Balrampur ..	86	32,689
		Total of the thana	86	32,689
		Total of the Subdivision	1,266	8,91,331
Sadar	(1) Purnea	.. (i) Purnea .	224	1,18,278
		(ii) Kasba ..	192	49,601
		(iii) Khajanchihat	66	19,620
		Total of the thana	482	1,87,499
	(2) Amnour	.. (i) Amnour ..	175	1,01,786
		(ii) Bausi ..	104	64,640
		Total of the thana	279	1,66,426
	(3) Dhamdaha	.. (i) Dhamdaha	244	1,33,942
		(ii) Rupauli ..	147	1,02,492
		(iii) Dharharwa	133	95,385
		Total of the thana	524	3,31,819
		Total of the Subdivision	1,285	6,85,744
		District total	4,435	24,71,230

Name of the District.

The name Purnea is a corrupt form of the old name Purania. In the old records we find this Purania name of the district. This name as stated in the locality has been derived from the word 'Purain' which means the lotus, a local plant which is said to have grown thickly in the beds of river Kosi and Mahananda, where swamps and marshes have been formed. This derivation has been ascertained by O'Malley also in the Old Gazetteer. Another derivation, which O'Malley points out is from the word, "Pur Aranya", which means the "Abode of forests" and which O'Malley translates as "Absolute Forests" which is not correct. W. W. Hunter and Buchanan have mentioned the name of Purania. The name Purania has a tradition of at least a few centuries behind it. Under the Moghul rule the district was constituted of *Sarkar* Tajpur, east of the Mahananda and *Sarkar* Purania, west of the river. There were two other *Mahals* of *Sarkar* Audanbar and one *Mahal* of *Sarkar* Lakhnauti in the south, all these *Sarkars* belonging to Subah Bengal, and also five *Mahals* of *Sarkar* Mongir (Monghyr) lying to the west of the Kosi, which fell in *Subah* Bihar. The northern strip on the border of Nepal formed then a part of the independent Kingdom of Morang. The old Kosi at that time formed the boundary between *Subah* Bihar and *Subah* Bengal and continued to be the boundary, till the five *Mahals* of *Sarkar* Mongir (Monghyr) were annexed to Purnea.*

Purnea at that time was a great military seat under the rule of a Faujdar. As a frontier district, Purnea had always an extra administrative importance. Even in the early British days, Purnea was considered an important responsibility particularly because this was on the border of Nepal. After the virtual failure of Capt. Kirpatrick's mission in Nepal to achieve anything substantial for the improvement of the Anglo-Nepalese commercial relation or for the settlement of the outstanding border disputes between the two countries it was decided to send Maulavi Abdul Qadir of Benares to Nepal. The instructions given by Sir John Shore to Abdul Qadir, although not mentioned in the minute of the Governor-General included the question of the adjusment of the boundary disputes between Purnea and Morung.* Qadir was asked to receive representation on this subject from the Rajah and to assure the Rajah that the Governor-General would give his most anxious consideration to the matter.

**Anglo-Nepalese Relations* by Dr. K. C. Chaudhury (1960), p. 78.

The district of Purnea did attain a certain amount of notoriety because of the bad climate and because criminals from Nepal and other border districts, often operated in this district In a similar manner the criminals of Purnea area also used to operate in Nepal and other districts. The Rajah's complaint in 1795 was that robbers from Purnea were often making inroads into Morung, his dependency. It was a common complaint of both that the predatory troups of *Sannyasis* were committing outrages on the inhabitants of the Company's provinces and in Morung. There were strips of practically no man's lands in the borders of the Purnea district from early British rule and even till the twenties of this century these strips were notorious for the operations of Shershabadia gangs. Gang dacoities have been common in such areas. It is for these reasons that the commonly quoted couplets got popularity implying that "if you want to court death, you need not take the poison—just go to Purnea and you will meet your death". The name of Purnea was a terror to many just as Morung in Nepal is considered to be a penal area. Till late, any officer being posted to Purnea considered it a misfortune and took the transfer as a punishment. The climate and health of Purnea were bad but there has been a great change since the Great Earthquake of 1934. But the allergy to Purnea particularly of the people of the districts of Chotanagpur and South Bihar has not yet fully liquidated.

Geology of Purnea District

Physical features and Geological formations.—The district lies in the Gangetic Alluvial Plain. The country rises gently northwards from Purnea, but south of the town it is flat. The older alluvium is found north of Purnea where it consists of coarse gravels and surface *kankar*. The newer alluvium composed of silts, clays and fine sands occurs to the south of Purnea The surface alluvium consists of a deep bed of sand.

The alluvium is supposed to have been derived from the Himalayas to the north and deposited on a gradually or intermittently subsiding surface.

In consequence of the flat gradient of the country the rivers that flow southwards tend to take pronounced meandering courses. The Kosi frequently changes its course. In the valley of the Kosi particularly, some of the older alluvial surface has been removed and re-distributed down-stream.

Water-supply.—There is copious water-supply from the streams and sinking tube-wells may be attended with success.

Economics.—The district is very poor in mineral resources. Only *kankar* is available in the northern portion of the district and it may be used for burning lime and road metal.

Earthquake.—During the Bihar-Nepal Earthquake of 1934, the district suffered very adversely. West of the Purnea town there was a good lot of subsidence of land surface, fracturing in the alluvium through which sand and water were ejected. Away from the town in the other directions the area experienced oblique shocks that could shatter buildings. Near Purnea the devastating movements were from east to west.

The cause of the earthquake was supposed to be the sudden relief to strain set up by the upward movement of the country north of a line containing Purnea and downward movement south of it. This line of strain extends to Motihari on the Champaran district, through Sitamarhi in the Muzaffarpur district

The epicentral tract of the earthquake where maximum damage was done was situated in the Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga districts.*

FAUNA—ZOOLOGY.

Purnea, from time immemorial has been known to be a paradise for the *shikari*. At one time there was an abundance of big game and birds for the *shikari*. About a century before herds of wild elephants were quite common damaging the paddy-fields of the district. The jungles of the Nepal *Terai* of Purnea border were their abode.

Rhinos used to be shot in the district about half a century before. The biggest rhino that stands stuffed in a standing position in the Museum of Calcutta was shot in Purnea district by Joe Shillingford, a well-known sportsman and Indigo-planter of Purnea.

Tigers were quite common. Their usual haunts were the jungles on the banks of the big Kosi and the high-grass jungles in

*Reference—*The Economic Geology and Mineral Resources of Bihar Province* by J. A. Dunn, Mem., G. S. I., Vol. 78, 1941.

The Bihar-Nepal Earthquake of 1934—Mem., G.S.I., Vol. 73.

the *tappus* to the north of the district. Leopards are still common especially in the jungles in the Kishanganj subdivision. They occasionally carried off lambs and goats from the villages.

Wolves and hyaenas were also abundant. Wild buffaloes used to move about in herds in the northern part of the district. The last herds were in the Bhowa and Mohanpur jungles to the south.

Deer of various varieties were abundant on the banks of the different tributaries of the Kosi. The ordinary hog-deers were so very abundant that the famous *shikari* Raja Kirtyanand Sinha of Banaili Raj had remarked (1916) that one could get a hundred hog-deer a day if he wished though it would be cruelty to shoot so many. Other types of deer like black-buck and spotted-deer (*cheetal*) were common. Pigs at one time were abundant.

Crocodiles were found in almost all the rivers and stagnant pools of water in Purnea district. Game birds were also plentiful Raja Kirtyanand Sinha in his book 'Purnea a Shikar Land' (1916) has observed: "Those generally met with can be easily classed under two different heads. The first is the class that breeds in the district, and the other, the migratory class. Under the former come the black and the grey partridges, pea-fowls, the floricans, cotton and whistling teals, button quails, the black and white ibis, golden and red-breasted plovers, green and blue rock pigeons, blue-fowls and other common birds like curlews, etc. Among the migratory birds of the winter are the geese of the two varieties (the bar-headed and the grey), the ducks (pin-tail, spotted bill, tufted pochard, grey and Brahmini), the jack and the painted snipe, wagtails, quail, and ortolans. Ortolans come in at the beginning of March and stay here for a couple of months and go away as soon as the summer heat becomes unbearable to them. They are found in thousands, like swarms of locusts, on the high waste-land—the 'maidan'—which is the prominent feature of the district. Though I have shot a few American black geese too. I cannot say if they are birds that are generally found in the district".

Another quotation from the same book will show what Purnea was as a *shikar* land before : 'In short it would not be an exaggeration to say that Purnea is pre-eminently a *shikar*-land—a land where one can get all sorts of game from a tiger down to a snipe, despite the fact that most of its vast jungle tracts have now been turned into luxuriant fields and orchards'. An eminent writer in his work *Tent Life in Tiger Land* has said: 'Purnea and

North Bhagalpur bordering on the *Terai* is admittedly even in India a very sportsman's paradise, and is probably, or was at all events, the best tiger-shooting ground in the world'. The observation still holds good, as will be seen from what I have to say in the pages that follow."

This description of Purnea, a paradise for a *shikari,* however, does not hold true now. Most of the jungles have now been cleared. The famous Bhowa and Mohanpur jungles where 30 years before wild buffaloes roamed about were the last to fall to the axe. The tall grass lands have now been reclaimed. Owing to the vagaries of rainfall and climate many of the water logged areas have become dry and some have been reclaimed. Economic pressure has been the incentive for bringing cultivable waste lands into reclamations. A liberal grant of gun licenses led to an indiscriminate shooting which at times almost touched off butchery and birds are no longer attracted to the remains of the water logged areas. The big games have almost disappeared and rhinos have not been seen in the course of the last four or five decades. Crocodiles and lizards were so abundant at one time that many people made a living out of shooting them. Crocodiles are very scarce now. It may be mentioned here that the Raja Bahadur of Banaili had shot an animal cross-breeded between a hyaena and a leopard, 130 tigers and two rhinos.

The reclamation of Kosi river which has been undertaken is the last knell of *shikar* in Purnea district. It cannot be expected now that in the hot months beginning with the advent of spring different types of wild animals from Nepal *Terai* would migrate towards the south. Tall waving grass and jungle shrubs, on the banks of the small streams of the Kosi tributaries, mentioned in "Purnea a *Shikar* Land" would no longer harbour wild animals. Raja Kirtyanand Sinha has rightly observed in his book that the river Kosi with its tributaries plays a very important part in giving the district of Purnea the character of a *shikar* land. Those who are interested in knowing more of Purnea in her days of *shikar* would find interesting reading in Raja Kirtyanand Sinha's two books 'Purnea a *Shikar Land*' (1916) and '*Shikar* in Hills and Jungles (1934). There are also two other books one by J. Shillingford and the other by L. Duff, who was once Subdivisional Officer throwing interesting fight on the fauna and avifauna of Purnea district. In Hamilton's description of Hindustan it occurs: "The population seems in some places to be diminishing for the extreme timidity and listlessness of the people have in

some parts prevented them from being able to repel the encroachments of wild beasts".

J. Inglis (Maori) in *Tent Life in Tiger Lands* (1892) observes: "Purnea and North Bhagalpur bordering on the *Terai* is admittedly even in India a very sportsman paradise, and is probably or was at all events the best tiger shooting ground in the world".

Only one variety of deer, the hog deer is still found on the banks of the tributaries of the Kosi, and the north of the district. Birpur area used to be full of wild life but it has now been cleared because of Kosi project and has been connected by roadways Dozens of motor vehicles now pass on these roads which used to be thick forests before. Pigs and wild pigs were available all over the district Pig-sticking was a favourite sport of the European planters. Even pigs are getting scarce O'Malley mentions of the tree jungles, called *Katahals*, where tigers were found in large numbers Such jungles were near the Kaliaganj Indigo Factory and also in *diara* jungles along the Ganges In 1909 two were shot at a place, seven miles from the Purnea town Man-eaters were very rare even at the time of O'Malley and they are extinct now Hyaenas have also become rare In 1934 a hyaena was shot in Kishanganj town by the Editor of this Gazetteer.

Jackal and foxes are still numerous. The number of wild buffaloes had been estimated to be 250 in the district by O'Malley. The Bhauah jungles of Raj Darbhanga had a number of them With the clearing of Bhauah jungle in the forties we have seen the last of wild buffaloes in Purnea district. Hares which were found in abundance on the high lands have declined owing to indiscriminate shooting and clearing of jungles and bushes Porcupines were very rarely met with when the last Gazetteer was compiled. They are not seen now.

Avifauna.

The district had a large variety of birds and the following classification can be made of them :—

(*a*) Game and non-game (wild) birds.

(*b*) Migratory and non-migratory birds.

(*c*) Land and water birds.

Game birds.

The game birds may be migratory and non-migratory both. Among the non-migratory game birds are partridge (black and

marsh), florican and the leek (lesser florican), peafowl, several varieties of quail pigeon, plover, and others, the marsh partridge are turning rare and are expected to become extinct in course of next few years. Varieties of bittern are available.

Water Birds.

Teal and snipe visit the district in the cold season from the *terai* areas. The polton teal, whistling teal, the duck and the spotted bill are the varieties of non-migratory water birds. The pink-headed duck which was found a few years back is extinct now.

The abovementioned game and water birds make their nests in bushes on the ground. The breeding of these birds is done generally before the rainy season in the flooded areas, but there cannot be any closed season for their breeding, and may breed even earlier. They must breed in such a manner so as to make their young ones able to fly before the floods. Mr. Johnson, a gentleman from Purnea mentioned to the Editor that he found eggs of Marsh partridge on the 26th February and the 7th of March.

Geese and whistling teal breed in old marshes and tanks. The black ibilis is also a migratory bird and is available all over the district. Among other migratory birds are Sarus (demoiselle crane), geese (four varieties), curlew, ortolan, egrets and storks in winter. They used to start pouring in the district from October and remained throughout the winter. Mr. O'Malley states that the Sarus is rare but demoiselle crane is abundant, which announces its arrival in great flocks by trumpeting. They are seldom shot. The varieties of duck were mallard, pintail, white eye and grey duck, tufted duck, pochard, spotted bill, Shoveller shag (teal), the blue wing snipe fantail, jack and painter. The varieties of geese are bare headed, grey, goose bukta and pink headed. The varieties of pigeons were blue, rock (smaller) and the bigger. Curlews were of three varieties, viz., the blue wing, grey and small grey. Quail did not arrive till December and remained till the end of April. Ortolan came after the middle of March and were seen all over the district. All these birds have declined now.

Parakeets were available in the north of Purnea town and wild peacocks on the south of the district. These birds created a great nuisance to the crop. The worst among the crop-eaters is the Kaim (*Galinula porphyriol*). This bird was celebrated for

its beauty among the ancient Greeks. They were found on the low-lands and remained for the whole year in the district. These birds are still seen but not in that proper abundance.

Another destructive bird is Kolang (common crane and Andrea Grus of Europe). It remained in the district throughout the cold season. When heat increases, it retires to breed. The above crop-eaters attack the fields in the day time and harass the farmers very much who retire from the fields being heavily tired after whole night watch of the field against the wild animals. One peculiar bird is called Galinule which moves unseen in the fields causing much damage to the crop. The *Kalatitir* or black partridge approaches very near the Fruncolin of Europe. The large partridge or *Titir* is an excellent bird for the table. Songka (*anasacuta*), Dighongs and the *Lalmunia* (anasferina) are also very excellent on the table. The ortolan is very delicious on the table and is a passage bird. It fattens on the grass seeds, which grow in the hot season, and which season is the best for its game. Lady Impey used to collect them. It approaches very near to Calandre Lark of Latham. Buchanan has mentioned that the similarity between the Ortolan (*Bageri*) and the Calandre Lark is due to the fact that when the rainy season appears a few stragglers might be reaching Italy and the southern Europe, where it is found rarely. But there are abundant marks by which the two birds can be distinguished, their habits and their uses being quite different and thus it is improper to consider them belonging to the same species. Other excellent eaters are snipe, florican and golden plovers, but remained much neglected till the Europeans poured in the district. Herons are available in water which are of various types and the white herons have a fishy taste. Sparrows, parakeets and *mainas* are eaten by the lower castes.

Other Wild Birds.

Among the other wild birds are vultures, eagles, kites, hawks, crows, found all over the district. Peacocks are found in the southern regions. Parrots and *mainas* migrate from the *terai* areas during the winter. These are not crop-eaters and do not cause much harm to the cultivators.

A bird enthusiast has given a script in 1959 on the current bird life in Purnea. It mentions that jungle quail, *Bageri*, green pigeon, different varieties of doves (Indian ring, spotted, red turtle, rufous turtle and green dove), Sky Lark, Bush Lark, Ashy Crowned Finch Lark, different kinds of snipes, *Kaim* (Whistling

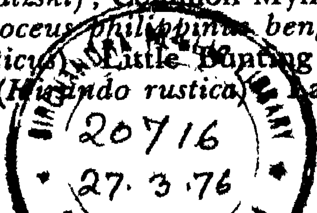
teal), Ibis, Herons (White and Grey), little Cormorant, Egret, Sarus cranes, Jakona, Large Pied Wagtail, River tern, Little Ringed Plover, Sput Ringed Plover, King-fisher, Swallow different kinds of ducks (*Adhinga, Dighock, Pintail, Surkhab, Mukhta, Lalshar Chaita*).

The shrub, jungles and orchards harbour Koel, Papiha, King Crow, Black-headed and golden oriols, Bablers, Bulbul, Indian tree pie, Wood pecker, Crow Pheasant, Hornbills, Nilkantha, Baya, Barber crimson breasted and green, Cuckoo and Hoopoe. Nightjars are sometimes met in the roadside jungles. The paradise fly catcher comes in the rainy season for nesting. White spotted fan tailed fly catcher are also common. Various kinds of *Mainas* are found in Araria and Kishanganj subdivisions. *Munas* of different species are also found. *Lalmunia* is common in Kishanganj subdivision. Fidda is found in southern portion of the district sitting on the telegraph wire. Yellow throated sparrow and *Tuti* are some times caught by the professional bird catcher and sold with Bageries. Large Indian Parakeet and green Parakeet make their nest in the holes of big *Simal* and Mango trees. In the rainy season swarms of blossom headed parakeet and green parakeet are seen in corn fields.

Magpai Robbin and Sun bird are among garden nesting species. Owls, Owlets, Vultures, Eagles are also found.

This list may be compared with the list of birds recorded from the district of Purnea by various observers including Dr. Francis Buchanan Hamilton (1809-10) and Dr. Jerdon (1860-64).

Jungle Crow (*Corvus macrorhynchos*), *House Crow* (*Corvus Splendens*), *Treepie* (*Crypsirina vagabunda*), Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch (*Sitta castanea*), Jungle Babbler (*Turdoides somervilei*), Red-capped Babbler (*Timalia piloata*), Red-vented Bulbul (*Pycnonotus cafer bengalensis*), Jerdon's Bushchat (*Saxicola Jerdoni*), Barnes's Bushchat (*Oenanthe melanoleuca melanoleuca*), Himalayan Rubythroat (*Luscinia pectoralis Pectoralis*) Paradise Flycatcher (*Terpsiphone paradisi*), Black-headed Shrike (*Lanius schach tricolor*), Brown Shrike (*Lanius cristatus cristatus*), Rosy minivet (*Pericrocotus roseus roseus*), Black Drongo (*Dicrurus macrocerus*), Golden Oriole (*Oriolus oriolus*), Black-headed Oriole (*Oriolus xanthornus*), Finsch's Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris poltaratzski*), Common Myna (*Sturnus tristis*), Black-throated Baya (*Ploceus philippinus benghalensis*), House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), Little Bunting (*Emberizza pusilla*), Common Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*), Large Pied Wagtail



(*Motacilla madraspatensis*), short-toed Lark (*Calendrella. brachydactyla*), Purple Sunbird (*Nectarina asiatica*), Asiatic Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus telephonus*), Pipiha (*Cueulus varius*), Pied Crested Cuckoo (*Calamator Jacobinus*), Koel (*Eudynamis scolopaceus*), Crow-Pheasant (*Centropus Sinensis*), Large Parakeet (*Psittacula eupatria*), Nilkant or Roller (*Corcaias bengalensis*), Pied Kingfisher (*Ceryle rudis*), Stork-billed Kingfisher (*Pelargopsis capensis*), White breasted Kingfisher (*Halcyon smyrnensis*), Grey Hornbill (*Tockus birostris*), House Swift (*Apus affinis*), Franklin's Nightjar (*Caprimulgus affinis*), Grass Owl (*Tyto capensis*), Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), Pondicherry Vulture (*Torgos calvus*), White-backed Vulture (*Pseudogyps bengalensis*), Pallas's Fishing Eagle (*Haliaetus leucoryphus*), Green Pigeon (*Teeron phoenicoptera phoenicoptera*), Peafowl (*Pavo cristata*), Red Jungle Fowl (*Gallus gallus*), Red Spur Fowl (*Galloperdix spadicea*), Blue-breasted Quail (*Coturnix chinensis*), Grey Quail (*Coturnix coturnix*), Black Partridge (*Francolinus francolinus*), Kyah or Swamp Partridge (*Francolinus gularis*), Grey Partridge (*Francolinus pondicerianus*), Little Button Quail (*Turnix Sylvatica*), Kora or Watercock (*Gallicrex cinerea*), Purple Moorhen (*Porphyrio Porphyrio*), Coot (*Fulica atra*), Bronze-winged Jacana (*Metopidius indicus*), Pheasant-tailed Jacana (*Hydroph sianus chirurgus*), Common Crane (*Grus grus*), Sarus Crane (*Grus Antigone*), Lesser Florican (*Syphoetides indica*), Bengal Florican (*Houbaropsis bengalensis*), Stone Plover (*Burhinus oedicnemus*), Golden Plover (*Pluvialis dominica*), Spur-winged Plover (*Hoplopterus spinosus*), Yellow-wattled Lapwing (*Lobipluvis malabarica*), Grey-headed lapwing (*Micrisarcops cinereus*), Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*), *Avocet* (*Recurvirostra avosetta*), Common Sandpiper (*Tringa hypoleucos*), Redshank (*Tringa totanus*), Fantail Snipe (*Gallinage Gallinage*), *Little* Cormorant (*Phalacocorax pygmaeus*), White Ibis (*Threskiornis aethipica*), White necked Stork (*Dissoura episcopus*), Adjutant Stork (*Leptopilos dubius*), Lesser Adjutant (*Leptopilos javanicus*), Openbill (*Anastomus oscitans*), Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*), Pond Heron (*Ardeola grayii*), Night Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*), European Bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*), Pink-headed Duck (*Rhodonessa caryophyllacea*), Grey Lag Goose (*Anser anser*), Lesser White-fronted Goose (*Anser erythropus*), Bar-headed Goose (*Anser indicus*), Large Whistling Teal (*Dendrocygna bicolor*), Widgeon (*Anas penelope*), Common Teal (*Anas crecca*), Pintail (*Anas acuta*), Garganey Teal (*Anas querqnedula*), Shoveller (*Anas clypeata*), and Pochard (*Aytha ferina*).

This list might be usefully supplemented by reference to the Darbhanga and Monghyr lists in the volumes of the Gazetteers for those districts.

Regarding game birds the following description occurs in the last *District Gazetteer* of Purnea by O'Malley published in 1911 :—

"The game birds that breed in the district are peafowl, *bittern,* both lesser and greater *florican,* partridge (black and marsh), *cotton teal,* whistling teal, pink-headed duck, button quail, black ibis, goggle and golden plover, green pigeons, blue fowl and some waders. Peafowl are found in fair numbers in the eastern tracts bordering on Malda, and a few in the *katahals* near the Ganges *diaras,* while bittern frequent the banks of marshes and swamps to the south of the district. The lesser florican or *lik* is rare, but is occasionally flushed on grass lands to the south. The greater florican and both varieties of partridge are seen in fair numbers; bags of half a dozen florican and of 15 or 20 brace of partridge in a day when beating for other game, are not unusual. Marsh partridge keep to the lower country and heavier cover to the east, south and west, but black partridge prefer high grass lands. Geese and whistling teal breed in old tanks and marshes. Pink-headed ducks are found in the south, but rarely. The black ibis also stays in the district, and stray pairs are to be seen in all parts. Besides the above, the *sarus,* demoiselle crane, geese (four varieties), duck and teal (several varieties), snipe, ibis (the spoon bill and white), curlew, quail, ortolan, plovers, egrets and storks visit the district in the season. These birds start coming in late in October and remain throughout the winter, when they may be seen in all inundated parts of the country. The *sarus* is rare, a few pairs only being met with, but the demoiselle cranes come in great flocks giving warning of their arrival by loud trumpeting. They are seldom shot, being very shy. Of geese there are four varieties, best known as the bare-headed, grey goose, *nukta* and pink-headed. Ducks include the mallard, pintail, white eye, grey duck, tufted duck, tufted pochard, spotted bill,

shoveller, shag, etc., teal, the blue wing, etc., snipe, the pintail, fantail, jack and painter; pigeons, a small variety like the blue rock and the bigger bird; and there are three varieties of curlew, the blue wing, grey and small grey. Quail do not arrive into the district till December, generally remaining till the end of April; they are really plentiful only in one year out of every five. Ortolan come in after the middle of March; for a couple of months or so, and in a good year, thousands are to be seen on high waste lands all over the district."

But this description is no longer correct. Many of the species mentioned in O'Malley's description have disappeared.

In the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* by O'Malley published in 1911 mention has been made of rhinoceros, tigers, leopards, buffaloes, hog-deer, antelope, *nilgai* and wild pigs. Leopards were quite plentiful. *Shikaris* used to kill tigers in the *terai* by the following device:—"At two or three points near which it is probable that the tiger will pass, a split bamboo, with all the knots cut out, is placed on a rest about a foot and half from the ground. To the end directed towards the tiger's path a strong bow is attached, the string of which, when bent, is fastened in a notch near the other end. In the hollow of the bamboo an arrow lies, which is made from some hard wood or old bamboo, well sharpened and poisoned with the juice of a plant, believed to be aconite. A long piece of firm cord is tied to the bow-string near the notch, and stretched forward across the tiger's path. As he comes along, he usually trips over the cord, thereby discharging the arrow, which generally hits him just behind the shoulder. The wound is often so severe as to be of itself fatal, but if not the poison soon causes death. For the protection of wayfarers there is a guard-string called *dharmsut*, i.e.. a cord stretched obliquely across the path at some distance from the bow. It is about four feet from the ground, so that the tiger can pass under it, but a cow or a man would strike against it." O'Malley had particularly mentioned that leopards were "still fairly plentiful", hog-deer are the only deer now left in Purnea and that even *nilgai* has become very scarce. Pigs were fairly plentiful and buffaloes existed in small numbers. Mention was also made of porcupines, hares, foxes and jackals.

Fish.

Fish is an important item in the food of the district. The district is very rich in water resources and several varieties of fish

are found. O'Malley mentions of *Buari, Hilsa, Tengra, Bachwa, Mui, Kanchatti, Naini, Katla* and *Kalhan*. Among these the most popular and plentifully found are *Hilsa, Rohu, Katla* and *Bachwa*. *Rohu* is the most delicious of them. Varieties like *Bhetki* and *Mullets* have been considered as sea-fish by Buchanan. *Hilsa, Bhetki* and *Mullets* are found in the Ganga during the rainy season. *Mirka, Kalabasa, Chutull* and *Phullie,* several varieties of carp and pike are mentioned to be found by Buchanan. These are not very delicious and are not eaten by rich people. *Bachwa* runs up to two pounds in weight and takes a high fly. *Kabai* is another flying fish and is found mostly in ponds and tanks. Some tanks and ponds are owned by big zamindars where fishes are preserved and grow to a larger size weighing up to 20 pounds. There are other smaller varieties like *Chilwa, Darwa* and other cat-fish family as *Sauri, Garai,* etc., which are eaten mostly by poor people. Purnea lobsters were once famous. *Magur* is another mud-fish much prized by the people. Purnea had a great name for the fish resources much of which has been exhausted by indiscriminate catch and export. Some peculiar varieties like very heavy *bangai* fish which looks like a monster is only available in this district in Bihar. They are relished by Muhammadans and some particular caste-men. Any of them would weigh more than a maund and the mouth has got very sharp set of teeth. These fish thrive on dead bodies and refuse matters.

Fishery in the district was very much neglected. The whole fish industry is, more or less, in the hands of the ignorant and poor fishermen who have no capital, no proper training and no improved implements and carry on the same indigenous method of fishing.

Their one idea is to catch fish regardless if their store is good or exhausted, without any idea of preserving them and improving their breed. Another factor for the deterioration of the fish is the water hyacinth known as Purple terror. There is a very large demand locally for fish but a considerable export is made every day.

It may be mentioned here that there does not appear to have been any detailed study of fish and fisheries of Purnea district since Dr. F. Buchanan made a study during his engagement from 1807 to 1813 for making a minute investigation into the history past and present, as well as the natural resources of the district, then under the Government of Bengal. Buchanan's script was published with an introductory note by Surgeon-Major Francis

Day, Inspector-General of Fisheries in India who had edited it. This was published as Volume XX of the Statistical Account of Bengal by W. W. Hunter. This want of a study is unfortunate because in the meanwhile we have probably lost a large number of species of fish that Buchanan found in Purnea district. As a matter of fact, Buchanan has mentioned 134 varieties of fish in Purnea district. Some of the Indian names that he has mentioned do not appear to be current any longer or may have undergone changes in the nomenclature.

Buchanan mentions that some fish used to be dried in order to be exported to the mountaineers and among the people of the district; this sort of dried fish was not in request. On investigation it was found that the export of dried fish has totally stopped and practically no fish is dried now. Buchanan had further mentioned that the Kochs used to prepare balls called *Sidal,* by pounding the fish with vegetables. This also seems to have almost died out.

Regarding the fishermen Buchanan thought they were very skilful in catching fish, and chiefly procure them in ditches by making little banks across and throwing out the water. He mentions: "The fishermen, so far as I saw, have none of the complicated machines used in Dinajpur and Rangpur, and a great many have neither nets nor boats, but in place of the former, use screens made of reeds, and never go to fish except in shallow water. There are none of the Ganrars, or people who fish with the harpoon; but some of the lower tribes of fishermen occasionally use a spear. Many of the natives fish with the rod for amusement. The rod and tackle are exceedingly coarse, and not at all fitted for showing dexterity in their use. The fisher never uses an artificial fly, nor does he drag his bail. It is suspended by a float, and he sits with the utmost patience, until a fish bites. He then drags out his prey by mere force, and, if it be small, makes it fly over his head, like our European boys catching minnows."

Buchanan went to the length of calculating the number of fishermen in the district which was estimated at about 14,000 fishermen and many of them were boatmen, and only fish when they cannot procure a voyage. He mentions: "It is probable, however, that each man, on an average, may catch fish to the value of eighteen rupees a year. They probably give at least to the value of one-third of the fish to the agents of the landlords. Some fish is exported. A little of this is dried, and is sent to Bhutan or Nepal, but by far the greater part is sent to Murshidabad, without any care taken to preserve it, farther than by using a quick conveyance. The kinds sent are chiefly the *Rohu, Mrigal, and Chital.*"

It is interesting to read in Buchanan's Memoirs that "In the cold season some boats, of from 100 to 200 maunds burthen, are half filled with water, and great quantities of small fish are put into them, and sent living to Calcutta. The fish are so thick that they are just kept wet, but the water is frequently renewed. The kinds are the *Singi, Muuri,* and *Kabai,* all small fishes very tenacious of life, and in much request with the natives, as supposed to possess restorative powers".

It may be mentioned that in place of fish being exported in boats half filled with water, it is now exported in ice-packed boxes to various destinations.

Crocodiles.

There are two varieties of it, the long nosed fish eating is called the *Garial* and the man-eating large sized is called the *Magur*. The *Garial* is found mostly in fast running water channels and rivers such as Kosi, Panar, Parwan, Mahananda and Kankai. The *Magur* is found in the abovementioned rivers as well in the sluggish and slow rivers like the Lowrati. Both the varieties lay eggs, each batch numbering about 20. The female one buries these eggs in sand to be hatched out by the heat of the sun. Mr. O'Malley noted that cattle and ponies and even unwarry people were carried off by these *Magurs*. They were shot in a large number by local sportsman and in the decade from 1930 to 1940 there was a big business in crocodile skin from Purnea. Indiscriminate shooting for business has brought in a very perceptible decline in the number of crocodiles in the district.

Insects.

Insects in Purnea district are plentiful and of several varieties.

The ball-rolling scarab or the *Bhumrah* is a very interesting beetle to watch. While busy rolling his ball of mud, in which the famale one has laid her eggs, they help each other, to roll the ball into a shallow hole which they prepare for its reception. They push their balls in with their rear legs while they walk backwards. The male beetle is just like a miniature rhinoceros.

The praying-mantis is allied to the grass-hopper family and two varieties of it are found. One is shaped just like a dried twig of a tree, and is brown in colour, the other has its wings formed like a green leaf. They derive their name by the attitude they take. It is an attitude of defence and they can defend their eyes from the attacks of their foes.

Crickets and grass-hoppers are very great noise makers. If one listens to their noise which they make in the evening, one is apt to notice that there is a definite relation between their performance and the temperature. If it is a hot evening these little musicians of nature will be more noisy while in a cold and dull evening their excursion is much slower. The so-called chirping of these insects results from rubbing together of the wing covers and has nothing to do with legs.

Flies.

Among the family of flies are the bees (honey), ordinary, house flies and other singing varieties of flies which annoy cattle very much. The ordinary flies are regarded as pestilential creatures. They are pollutors of food, carriers of infections and a standing menace to the health of men and animals.

Bees.

The bees are well termed the busy bees. Fruit growers and gardeners owe much to these busy bees. Bees carry the pollen from one flower to another. The supply of wax and honey to mankind is a very great product that they make. Two varieties of honey bees are available in the district. The best known is the dark brown bee. The other is a small variety, a little bigger than the house fly, but very similar to the latter. This bee usually has its hive in holes of trees or mud walls. The honey produced by this bee is considered by some people to be superior in flavour to the honey produced by the larger variety.

Crawling Insects.

Centipedes (*Gozurs*) and *Gangoars* are the usual varieties of the crawling insects, found in the district. Centipedes are poisonous insects and cause swelling when they creep on human body. These are found mostly at damp and dirty places. Their colour is red and a centipede is said to have hundreds of legs. The *Gangoar* is another variety of crawling insects and is found mostly at damp and muddy places. It breeds in thousands, and has hundreds of legs. Its colour is also red, but it is not poisonous like the centipedes. It is a very timid creature and when touched rolls in the size of a rupee. Both centipedes and *Gangoars* are from an inch to four inches long.

Scorpions are also seen in the district particularly in damp places and jungles.

Ants.

There are several varieties of ants, starting from the ordinary house ant to the large black ant, the black and red tree ant, the

white ant and the green large sized ants. The red and black tree ants live mostly on *Sal* and mango trees. The white ants destroy most of the ordinary timber trees except teak, and attack the roots of living plants. These ants make tunnels and galleries in homesteads and fields and thus do a great damage to the crop. There is a local belief among the folk people that when ants come out in a chain, they announce the rain. The author has himself experimented the truth in this saying.

Reptiles.

There are several varieties of snakes, both poisonous and non-poisonous. Among the poisonous snakes the Cobra is well known and is seen all over the district. The water Cobra, which the folk people call as '*Paniah Deraj*' is more poisonous than the Cobra, and reaches the length of eight feet and more. The *Karait* or black Cobra is found all over the district, but mostly in the monsoon forests. This is the most poisonous snake. Another variety of *Karait* (*Bahira*) is said to be non-poisonous. It is brown in colour and has yellow bands down its body and is very slow and sluggish. The Russel viper is also seen. It is a venomous snake, but its poison takes a long time to affect. Pythons are also seen and usually inhabit in well-wooded mango groves, some of them being very long, but the average length being 8—12 feet

Lizards.

Can be seen very commonly on the walls of the houses. There are two varieties of it—the Iguana and the Monitor Lizard. The Iguana was fairly common in the district, till it was discovered that their skins had a market value. For some time there was a brisk trade in lizard skin and they are now scarce. One was shot by F. Buchanan and was 6′6″ long and the skin had been kept in Calcutta Museum. Its colour was dark brown and its head was just like a house lizard. The long tailed garden lizard is very common in the district, and is very useful for the gardens as it feeds on small insects which cause harm to the plants and flowers.

FLORA OF PURNEA TOWN.

The flora of the town of Purnea is made up of trees, shrubs, and grasses. Some of the indigenous trees are—

(1) The Cotton Tree—This tree when full grown is a large tree, and has big blood-red flowers. It is usually

in full bloom in April, a cotton tree in full flower; against a background of green of other trees, is really a beautiful sight; and when there is a group of them, all clustered together the sight is very pleasing to the eye.

(2) The Inimosa, which is the Indian Babool; it has a yellow small pomp-pomp flower; there is another variety, which is a shrub and has a pale mauve flower.*

(3) The Indian Laburnum (Amaltas) is another very attractive flowering tree with its festoons of small yellow flowers.

(4) The Poinciana known to the people as the "Gold Mohur Tree" is very pretty when in flowers; it has very brittle branches, and usually suffers badly from the April and May storms.

(5) The Lagerstorocmia or Grape flower is a large tree, with very dark green leaves; it usually flowers in April, and has bunches of dark mauve flowers.

(6) The *Chandan* or *Sandal* wood tree, which usually flowers in March, and again in October; its blossoms have a very pungent scent; with an aromatic suggestion of health, also like that of a pine tree.

Amongst the shrubs the most known and seen in most gardens of the town are the Quisqualis, and all the various kinds of gardens, Hibisous, Jasminums, Queen of the night (Hus-ne-Hena), Poinsettias. During the cold weather season, from October to March, most flower lovers have their gardens gay with winter annuals; but these are mostly imported seed, and not indigenous to the district.

A factor which is largely responsible for the deterioration of fish in the rivers and Jheels is the water Hyacinth, or as it is commonly known "The purple terror". A look down below the Captain bridge shows how water is clogged with this pest; with the result, that no fish can live. It is no exaggeration to say that in the district rivers, the fish supply has decreased 60 per cent in the last 25 years because of water hyacinth menace.

THE CLIMATE OF PURNEA DISTRICT.

The district has a generally humid climate. The cold season commences in November and lasts till February. March, April and May and the early part of June may be termed the hot season which is followed by the monsoon season lasting till September. October is a transitional month.

Rainfall.

The district has a network of ten rainguage stations with records extending in some cases to 70 years. The statements of the rainfall at the individual stations and over the district as a whole are given in Tables 1 and 2. The average annual rainfall over the district is 1,630.3 mm (64 18″). The rainfall generally increases from the south-west to the north-east. About 82 per cent of the annual total of rainfall is received during the monsoon months June to September. The variation from year to year of the rainfall is not large. During the fifty-year period 1901 to 1950, the highest annual total amounting to 139 per cent of the normal was in 1916. The year 1908 was one with the lowest rainfall which was only 51 per cent of the normal. In this fifty-year period rainfall less than 80 per cent of the normal occurred only in four years and none of them consecutively. But at some of the individual stations consecutive two years of low rainfall have been experienced. Gondwara (Korha) had rainfall less than 80 per cent of the normal on six consecutive years during 1901 to 1906. It will be seen from Table 2 that in 32 years out of fifty the annual rainfall of the district was between 1,400 and 1,900 mm.

The highest rainfall in 24 hours which fell at any station in the district was 486.7 mm (19.16″) at Purnea on September 14, 1879.

Temperature.

Meteorological data are available for Purnea observatory for a long period of years. The data of this station may be taken to be representative of the conditions in the district. The cold season starts in November when both day and night temperatures drop rapidly. January is the coldest month with the mean daily minimum temperature at 8.8° C (47.8° F) and the mean daily maximum at 23.8° C (74.8° F). In association with cold waves the minimum temperatures may sometimes go down to within two

degrees of the freezing point of water. From March temperatures rise and April is the hottest month of the year. Maximum temperature in this month and in May sometimes reaches 43.5° C (110.3° F). With the onset of the monsoon early in June day temperatures drop slightly but the night temperatures continue to be high. After September the night temperatures decrease more rapidly than the day temperatures.

Humidity.

Except in the first half of the summer season humidities are generally above 70 per cent. In the winter afternoons humidities are lower. The summer season is comparatively drier especially in the afternoons.

Cloudiness.

During the summer and winter months skies are generally clear or lightly clouded. In May cloudiness increases. In the monsoon season skies are heavily clouded or overcast.

Winds.

Winds are generally light except in the pre-monsoon months of April and May and in the monsoon months when they strengthen a little. From May to September winds blow from directions between north-east and south-east. In October and November they are variable and light. In other months they are mainly south-westerly or westerly.

Special Weather Phenomena.

Storms and depressions which originate in the Bay of Bengal especially those in the late monsoon and the post monsoon period affect the district and cause heavy rain and strong winds. Thunderstorms can occur in all the months but the frequency is higher in the monsoon months, and rather rare in the winter months. The pre-monsoon thunderstorms are violent. Occasional fogs appear in the winter season.

Tables 3, 4 and 5 give the temperature and humidity, mean wind speed and frequency of special weather phenomena respectively for Purnea.

TABLE

Normals and extremes

Station	No of years of data		January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August
1	2		3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Kishanganj	50	a	11 9	17 [illegible]	18 8	60 2	167 4	393 2	[illegible]3 3	476 3
		b	0 7	1 5	1 3	3 1	7	13 3	17 3	16 9
Araria	50	a	9 1	10 0	12 7	31 4	13[illegible] 4	310 6	[illegible]	564 7
		b	0 7	1 [illegible]	1 2	7	[illegible]	11 [illegible]	16 [illegible]	16 4
Purnea	50	a	8 6	1[illegible] 3	13 [illegible]	34 0	100 6	[illegible] 1	[illegible] 3	[illegible]
		b	0 7	1 [illegible]	1 1	2 1	[illegible]	11 4	16 [illegible]	16 [illegible]
Gondwara (Kotha)	50	a	9 1	1[illegible]	1[illegible] 4	26 [illegible]	101 [illegible]	[illegible]2 9	[illegible]	[illegible]
		b	0 7	1 3	0 [illegible]	1 6	4 4	9 8	1[illegible]	14 1
Barsoo	46	a	5 1	12 2	8 6	23 [illegible]	88 [illegible]	231 7	301 7	[illegible]
		b	0 5	1,1	0 6	1 7	4 3	9 4	12 9	13 0
Forbesganj	50	a	6 1	12 2	12 5	38 1	115 6	[illegible]78 1	413 8	33[illegible]
		b	0 7	1 0	1 0	2 2	5 [illegible]	11 1	1[illegible] 5	14 5
Bahadurganj	21	a	6 3	16 3	13 7	49 5	164 6	392 4	451 9	395 7
		b	0 6	1 7	1 1	3 6	8 7	13 8	17 6	15 9
Dhamdaha	32	a	11 9	17 0	9 9	24 4	84 6	213 6	332 2	303 5
		b	1 1	1 6	0 6	1 4	4 8	9 6	14 6	14 3
Maniharı	19	a	10 9	25.9	11.7	39 4	87 4	200 1	271 0	294 9
		b	0 9	1 9	0 8	1 9	4 5	9 7	14 7	14 6
Kaliaganj	29	a	4 6	6 9	18 8	54 9	125 7	393 5	535 7	508 0
		b	0 5	0 5	1 3	3 6	7 2	12 7	16 4	15 4
Purnea (Dist.)		a	8 4	16 1	13 0	39 1	117 0	296 4	397.7	363 1
		b	0 7	1 4	1 0	2 4	5 9	11 3	15 6	15.1

a Normal rainfall in mm.

b Average number of rainy days (days with rain of 2.5 mm. or more).

1.

of rainfall.

September.	October.	November.	December.	Annual.	Highest annual rainfall as % of normal & year.*	Lowest annual rainfall as % of normal & year.*	Heaviest rainfall in 24 hours.† Amount (mm.).	Date.
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
a 303.5	112.8	9.4	3.1	2177.4	148 (1938)	37 (1908)	369.8	1933 June 26.
b 12.9	3.7	0.7	0.2	79.1				
a 282.5	76.5	8.4	2.3	1692.2	146 (1911)	56 (1901)	275.6	1910, June 19.
b 11.4	3.2	0.5	0.1	73.0				
a 268.2	82.3	10.2	3.1	1492.6	150 (1916)	46 (1908)	486.7	1879, September 14.
b 11.9	3.7	0.6	0.2	71.1				
a 286.8	88.9	7.6	2.3	1433.1	219 (1945)	39 (1923)	467.4	1898, September 15.
b 9.7	3.2	0.3	0.1	60.0				
a 256.3	92.7	11.4	2.8	1337.6	163 (1913)	42 (1923)	243.8	1899, July 13.
b 9.8	2.9	0.4	0.2	56.8				
a 247.4	74.4	3.8	1.8	1535.8	142 (1910)	56 (1901)	342.9	1934, July 26.
b 9.8	2.5	0.3	0.1	64.2				
a 359.4	69.9	5.1	1.8	1926.6	148 (1938)	62 (1930)	272.3	1934 July 25.
b 13.6	3.4	0.4	0.1	80.5				
a 264.4	94.0	11.2	2.8	1369.5	144 (1946)	58 (1923)	254.0	1938 September 17.
b 10.5	3.4	0.4	0.2	62.5				
a 242.1	117.6	6.9	1.5	1309.4	136 (1939)	78 (1940)	214.4	1936, October 5.
b 10.2	3.5	0.3	0.2	63.2				
a 298.5	73.7	6.6	0.5	2027.4	142 (1927)	44 (1908)	260.3	1892 July 8.
b 10.5	2.3	0.3	0.1	70.8				
a 286.9	88.3	8.1	2.2	1630.3	139 (1916)	51 (1908)		
b 11.0	3.2	0.4	0.1	68.1				

*Years given in brackets.

†Based on all available data up to 1958.

TABLE 2.

Frequency of annual rainfall in the district.

(DATA 1901—1950).

Range in mm.	No. of years.	Range in mm.	No. of years.
801— 900 ..	1	1601—1700 ..	9
901—1000 ..	0	1701—1800 ..	7
1001—1100 ..	0	1801—1900 ..	5
1101—1200 ..	1	1901—2000 ..	5
1201—1300 ..	2	2001—2100 ..	1
1301—1400 ..	4	2101—2200 ..	3
1401—1500 ..	6	2201—2300 ..	1
1501—1600 ..	5		

TABLE 3.

Normals of temperature and relative humidity (Purnea).

Month.	Mean daily maximum temperature.	Mean daily minimum temperature.	Highest maximum ever recorded.		Lowest minimum ever recorded.		Relative humidity*	
							0830	1730.
	oC	oC	oC	Date.	oC	Date.	%	%
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
January	23.8	8.8	28.9	1902, January 31	1.7	1955, January 1	85	60
February	26.1	10.9	34.4	1896, February 28	1.7	1891, February 8	76	48
March ..	31.9	15.3	40.6	1941, March 29	6.7	1927, March 2	60	35
April ..	35.5	20.7	43.3	1891, April 15	11.7	1905, April 5	60	38
May ..	34.8	23.6	43.9	1916, May 27	15.6	1885, May 6	72	59
June ..	33.0	25.3	42.8	1956, June 3	17.8	1906, June 6	82	75
July ..	32.1	25.9	36.7	1942, July 9	21.1	1921, July 19	85	80
August ..	31.7	25.8	37.2	1957, August 21	21.7	1909, August 31	86	82
September	31.8	25.3	37.2	1923 Sep. 28	19.4	1899, Sep. 28	84	82
October ..	31.1	21.6	35.6	1957, Oct. 8	10.0	1891, Oct. 31	80	75
November	28.1	14.8	32.8	1957, Nov. 4	7.2	1883, Nov. 21	81	71
December	24.8	9.8	30.6	1953, Dec. 3	3.3	1883, Dec. 21	85	68
Annual ..	30.4	19.0					78	64

*Hours I.S.T.

TABLE 4.

Mean wind speed in Kn/hr (Purnea).

January.	February.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	September.	October.	November.	December.	Annual.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
2.4	3.5	4.7	5.8	5.8	5.1	4.3	3.9	3.2	2.3	1.6	1.8	3.7

TABLE 5.

Special weather phenomena (Purnea).

Mean no. of days with—	January.	February.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	September.	October.	November.	December.	Annual.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Thunder	0.1	1.3	1.4	2.8	5.6	9.7	9.0	12.4	11.8	2.1	0.1	0.2	56.5
Hail ..	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Duststorm	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3
Squall ..	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Fog ..	0.3	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.5	0.1	1.4

NATURAL DIVISIONS.

Purnea district is constituted of four subdivisions, namely, Sadar, Araria, Kishanganj and Katihar.

The district had been taken to be divided diagonally into two natural divisions from the north-west to the south-east corner by Mr. O'Malley, the first lying in the beds of river Kosi, and its tributaries, the other lying in the beds of rivers Ganga, Mahananda, Parwan and others. But as now the course of river Kosi has

shifted westwards and touches nearly the border of Saharsa district this two-fold division diagonally does not apply. A broad three-fold division may be thought of, the first lying in the old beds of river Kosi and on the west of the river, the next being on the east of river Kosi, the bed of river Ganga in the south-east and the beds of rivers Mahananda and Parwan and their tributaries, the third part being a small hilly tract lying on the north on the border of Nepal.

The western division is still a sandy grass land full of dead channels of river Kosi, and huge tracts of sandy uplands. There is no cultivation and a very little vegetation here and there of sandy tall grasses along the banks of rivers Saura and Karakeri. On the north and west of Purnea town there are vast stretches of pasturage opening out into fine grassy stretches called "ramnas". Some of these are now being utilized for construction of houses.

The second part is formed of soft clayey soil along the rivers Ganga and Mahananda in the south and east and hard clayey soil along the banks of the Mahananda and the Ganga. This division is extremely cultivable, full with fertilising deposits and the chief products are rice, sugarcane, cereals. Wheat of a fair quality is produced in *Pargana* Dharampur. Along the Ganga there is very little vegetation but the newly formed *Chars* of alluvial islands, formed after inundation are covered with tall and coarse grass. They were once the abode of wild animals. Many of these *Chars* have now come under cultivation. On the north along the Mahananda are marshes, swamps and ditches which are never fully dry, where grow abundance of wild lotus and lilies.

This part is full with streams and streamlets by means of which every part of this tract is accessible during the floods.

The hilly part on the north or the *terai* area is composed of alluvial soil of hard clay rich in cultivation. The Chotapahar is a small hill of nodular limestone. This area falls on the mouths of rivers Mahananda, Parwan, Kankai and Kosi, where the beds are not wide and the rivers though very deep are not navigable as the current flows very fast. On the uplands in the Nepal are forests which are the abodes of wild animals like tigers, bears, dear, wild buffaloes and elephants. There have been occasional visits of these wild animals to Purnea district.

Configuration and Soil.

The district lies mostly in the Gangetic plains, so it has most of the features characteristic of a submontane alluvial tract. There is a hilly tract on the north with a small hill of calcareous belt,

called Chotapahar near Manihari. It has a slope from the north to the south, and is traversed by a number of rivers and their tributaries, streams and streamlets, and is divided nearly in two equal parts from north to south by the old beds of river Kosi, otherwise the district is a dead level, with huge tracts of sandy beds in the west made by river Kosi, and marshes and dried up *jheels* and streamlets of a fine alluvial clayey soil in the east in the beds of rivers Ganga, Mahananda, Parwan and their tributaries. The soils vary from sandy loam to heavy clays. North of the district is a strip of land of clayey soil. The areas lying between Jalalgarh, Araria and Forbesganj are of sand deposits with hardly 3″ to 6″ surface soil. They are not fertile and have little or no cultivation. West of Purnea in Dhamdaha there are sandy loam on uplands and clayey loam on lowlands and along the Ganga and Mahananda flooded areas in Chausa, Manihari, Barsoi and Mainagarh are clayey loam of fine alluvial tracts, which are very fertile.

Geological Formation.

The district is composed of alluvial soil, partly old and partly new. The old alluvium is found in the north of the district, where it consists of coarse gravels and surface *Kankars* (stone dust). The new alluvium is available in the south of the district and is composed of silt, clay and fine sand. In the middle of the district in the beds of rivers Kosi and Kankai are sandy uplands with a deep layer of sand 3—5 feet deep. The alluvial soil is supposed to be brought by the Ganga and its tributaries from the Himalayas, and is very rich with fertilising elements. During the earthquake of 1934 the district was badly affected and there were cracks in the earth out of which spread sand and water. The shock was the heaviest near the town of Purnea. A lot of sand had been thrown up the beds of rivers and wells but the configuration of the district was not permanently affected.

Mines and Minerals.

The district has no specific mines and minerals. There is a nodular limestone belt at a detached hill near Manihari called Chotapahar.

Francis Buchanan in his visit in the first part of the 19th century has left some remarks about mines and minerals. He observes—

> "The only rock in the country that has been discovered is in a small detached hill at Manihari, where a calcareous mass reaches the surface and is of pretty

considerable dimensions. I can perceive nothing in it like Strata, and in different parts it is of very various appearances. It is what Wallerius calls an aggregate rock, that is, it would seem as if composed of many small pebbles or nodules united by a common cement. On the surface many of the nodules are half-detached, I shall not say positively whether from the cement having been worn away, or from not yet having been completed; but the former is the most probable, as the surface is also penetrated by many holes, as if worm eaten. In the cement there are also many veins, so that a broken surface of it has much the appearance of porphyry. The nodules are sometimes rounded at the corners, as if water-worn; at others they are very irregular in their shape, and a few are angular, like felspar. The stone contains some small cavities, the insides of which, although uneven, are enamelled, as if they had been in fusion. The most common colour of the ground or cement is a pale brick red; but it is sometimes white, in which case the stone is always much softer. The colours of the nodules are very various, white, iron black, the same mixed with red, achre yellow, brownish red and drab. In general the nature both of the cement and nodules seems to be nearly the same. The internal surface of the stone is dull, with a few shining points irregularly scattered. It feels dry. The external surface is rough with protuberant nodules, and full of cylindrical perforations. The fracture is compact, sometimes a little inclining to conchoidal. The structure is solid, the fragments indeterminate and sharp. It is everywhere opaque. It is readily scratched with a knife, the powder being of the same colour with the part scratched. It is tough. It effervesces strongly with nitric acid, which although it reduces the whole to powder, dissolves only a part, probably about a half. The strongest heat that I could give it with a small charcoal fire, continued for two days, did not reduce it to lime. It indeed became white, attracted water with a strong effervescence and a hissing noise, and rent into many fragments; but it did not fall to pieces, the quantity of other matter retaining the lime."

There is no mineral spring in the district. Within 15 cubits water is normally struck and there are wells where water is available within 5—10 cubits. At Manihari water is available at the depth of 10—15 cubits.

During the floods every year the Kosi bring with it a large quantity of sand and *Kankar* and leaves them raising the bed and changing its course consequently. In the valley of this river some of the older alluvial surfaces have been removed and re-distributed downwards.

In the extreme north, where there are mainly hill-stream, the floods do not leave much sand or silt as their course is very narrow But on coming to the plains the rivers become wider though not very deep Such rivers are the Kosi, Mahananda and Kankai but their banks are not very high There is a slope from the north to the south. The slope as has been pointed out by O'Malley is nearly doubled as one goes further northwards of Purnea town This is due to the *Kankar* clay of the older alluvium being in juxtaposition to the sands and silts of the newer alluvium and this elevation may even be visualised.

Due to the shifting of the Kosi, the whole area lying to the west of Purnea town, up to the border, has been covered with sand and not fit for good cultivation unless heavily manured Islampur portion of which has now gone to West Bengal is now full of sandy tracts due to the change in the course of tne river. The Araria area is losing the top-soil every year due to erosion by wind.

VEGETATION.*

Purnea, like the rest of North Bihar, is a low-lying plain (125 feet above sea level) lying between the Himalayas in the north and the elevated limestone belt along the bank of the Ganga on the south. On the west, the district is intersected by numerous old beds of the Kosi river, while to the east, there is a network of stagnant swamps and dried up channels which mark the former courses of the tributaries of the Ganga. The old beds preserve to some extent the appearance of a river, but they are much broken by diverging, re uniting and interlacing channels. During the rains they get the local drainage as also some spill of the Kosi and

*Prof J. G. Srivastava, now of National Botanical Gardens of Lucknow carried out some field investigations and this section is largely based on them

other rivers. There being no high banks to them, and their passages being choked up with water-weeds, these channels always overflow and inundate large areas of low-lying lands which thus turn into marshes and swamps.

The Kosi usually brings on enormous amount of rocks, boulders, sand and silt which get deposited in the bed of the river as the velocity of water is reduced. The accumulation naturally elevates the bed of the river and in some places forms alluvial fans. When the bed is elevated, the river is at liberty to move in any direction, and this often happens. A new channel is formed and the old one is left behind. In this way, it is said the mercurial Kosi has left six old channels in Purnea in the period 1703—1822 A. D. During the process of change in course, the river covers vast areas of arable land with a thick layer of sand. That is why in the north-west part of the district the soil is all sand with hardly 4 to 6 inches of silt on top, somewhere even this is absent. In the south-west part, where the Kosi has not carried any sand, the soil is either a sandy or a clayey loam.

The Mahananda and Parman (Pamar) rivers do not bring any sand. Therefore, the south-eastern part of the district has a clayey loamy soil. The presence of sand deposits in the Islampur area is possible due to the course of the Kosi river having been there long long back. The Araria area is fast losing the top soil due to erosion by wind. And if adequate steps are not taken, may reach the condition seen in Islampur.

The banks of all the rivers are low, and the overflow of water from over the banks occurs almost every year. Thus, vast areas get flooded and covered over with a layer of silt.

For the purpose of describing the vegetation, the district could be divided into the following eight zones :—

(1) The rivers, their old channels and the banks; the marshes and the swamps and the borders.

(2) The man-made ditches along the roads and the railway lines.

(3) The sand covered uplands.

(4) The lands along the roads and railways.

(5) The protected areas in the railway yards; the neglected orchards; the pioneer monsoon forests.

(6) The monsoon forests in the northern part of the district

(7) The urban areas

(8) The cultivated lands, both low-lying and elevated, and the rice fields

(1) The active rivers are too fast flowing to have any vegetation in them The few sheltered pools here and there show spirogyra and other algae in them The rivers never dry up and no land plants are to be seen in their beds The old channels of the Kosi and of the other rivers are very shallow, and excepting for the Kali Kosi which is devoid of any vegetation, all others (e g Saura) contain during the rains, near their margins, lots of rooted immersed water weeds like wild *Oryza sativa, Panicum proliferum, Pistia stratioides, Monochorie vaginalis* and *M hastata* and *Eichhornia crassipas,* the last one being the dominant plant In the dry seasons, there is very little water in them, and their flow also becomes negligible, therefore, they function as marshes and swamps

The marshes and swamps are formed near and radiating from the rivers and the old channels They harbour a lot of aquatic vegatation In the middle are seen submerged plants like *Hydrilla verticillata, Lagarosiphon alternifolia, Caratophyllum demersum, Utricularia flexuosa* and *U Stellaris,* and floating plants like *Pistia, Azolla,* and some Lemnas Nearer the banks are found the rooted immersed plants like *Limnophila spp Cyperus cephalotes,* and *C platystylis, Monochoria hastata* and *M Vagina lis,* various lilies lotus, etc Still nearer are seen *Butomus umbel latus, Alisma plantago* and *A Reniformis Lippia geminata,* various species of Polygonum, *Aeschynomone aspera* and *Ae indica,* and growing on the damp banks and extending their branches on the surface of water are seen *Neptunia oleracea, Cyanotis axillaris, Imomea reptans, Jussia repens* and *Caesulia axillaris.*

Most of the plants of the zone above described, serve as food for pigs and buffaloes They choke up the surface of water and serve as breeding places for mosquitoes Eichhoria blocks up the old channels and thus brings about spilling of the water The fruits and rhizomes of lilies and lotus are eaten by men

One very interesting feature of these marshes and swamps is the presence of large compact floating masses of vegetation known as "suds" The common sud forming plants are *Limnophila heterophylla, Eichhornia, Adenostemma viscosum, Cyperus cephalotes,* the fern *Ceratopteris* and others

The banks of the rivers Mahananda and Parman in portions that are far away from human habitations, are covered with a dense vegetation. The banks of the old channels like Saura are covered with tall grasses intermixed with plants described later.

The borders of the marshes and swamps, and the low banks of the old channels where the soil is very wet and rich in organic matters, are cultivated with paddy and jute. Such banks as are covered over with sand are not cultivated and they grow a low grassland flora with typically moisture loving perennial species like *vetiveria zizanioides*, *Phaiagmites Kaika*, *Aiunde donax*, ***Eleusine aegyptica*** and *E. indica*, various species of Cyperus, Ammanias, Jussia fissendo-carpa and various Polygonums also grow up there.

(2) The man-made ditches along the roads and railway lines particularly if new or far away from the rivers or their old channels to receive a supply of spill water and silt, retain their beds in a sandy condition, so that the water that they collect percolates very fast. They may develop a growth of spirogyra and other algae in the rainy season but at its end they are dry and show only a poor rice field flora. The old ditches show many aquatics, particularly such as perennate by means of root stocks or tubers, like *Aponogeton spp.*, *Potamegeton spp.*, *Asteracantha longifilia*, *Ipomer reptans*, also lemnas and wolffia are found. The latter two serve as food for the ducks and other birds that migrate to Purnea from distant lands.

(3) The sand covered uplands that never accumulate any rain water, grow in them a high grassland flora, consisting of *Cynodon dactylon*, *Dichanthium*, *annulatum*, *D. caricosum*, *Amphilophis pertusus*, *Eulalia cummingil* and other grasses. These areas being heavily grazed, tall grasses like *Themeda strigosa*, *T. quadrivalvis* and *Apluda nutrica* can grow only in protected areas. On these grow up a few annual climbers. In other place only the dwarf and hardy species like *Chrysopogon aciculatus*, *Paspalidium flavidum*, *Imperta cylindrica* and others enumerated above can grow. With these are found growing prostrate dicots like Evolvulus alsinoides, E. nummularius, triflorum and dwarf dicots.

Lands which have recently got covered with sand due to a *shift in the course of the rivers, are covered with very deep layers of sands; they are uneven and fairly elevated On such lands only* the very hardy types of grasses like *Pollinidium angustifolium*, *Sacoharum spontaneum* and *Chrysopogon aciculatus* can grow, and

these too, after decades of weathering. Such lands are seen west of Pūrnea town. Krityanand Nagar is one such place. The first two grasses are used to make strings and paper pulp.

(4) The lands along the roads and the railways show a growth of plants enumerated under section (3), followed by *Croton sparsiflorus, Sidaspinosa, Cassia occidentalis* and *Lantana camara.* Under the protection of these scrubs grow *Leucas linifolia, L. cephalotes, Clerodendron infortunatum, Hyptis suaveolens* and *Pogostemon plectranthoides,* none of which is grazed upon by cattle.

(5) In protected areas, as in railway yards, and in neglected orchards and gardens, grow plants described in (4) followed by *Acacia arabica, A. Parnesiana, A. Acatechu, Randia demetorum, Vangueria spinosa, Zinyphus oenoplia, Caesalpinia crista* and *Mimosa himalayana.* These in turn followed by *Anona sqamosa, A reticulata, Bombax malabaricum, Pithecolobium dulce, Dalbergia sissoo,* and *Albizzia stipulate.* Climbers like *Smilax macrophylla, Tinospora cordifolia, Mucuna prurita, M. imbricata, Dioscorea spp.* and *Cephelandra indica* are very plentiful. Such vegetation is seen along the railway line near Purnea Junction Station.

With protection continued for a longer period, such areas give rise to a pioneer monsoon forest, such as are seen near Purnea city, near the railway station of Purnea Junction, Kasba and elsewhere. In all such forests, the main species are *Trewia nudiflora, Ficus cunia, F. benghalensis, Mallotus repandus, Croton oblongifolius,* etc. though *Colebrookia oppositifolia, Jatropha cureas, Acacia spp., Vangueria spinosa, Anona spp.,* and *Grewia spp.,* are also found. *Dioscoreos, Piper longum, Smilax spp.* are the chief climbers and *Fleureya interrupta, Pouzolzia indica, Piles peploides* are some of the under-growth.

The low grasslands directly give place to such pioneer forests, as are seen on the banks of most of the old channels of Kosi. e.g., Saura, on way to Purnea city, but the pioneers here are *Barringtonia acutangula, Salix tetrasperma, Ficus heterophylla* among the trees; *Alpinia allughas, Zingiber spp., Costos speciosus,* various colocasias, and alocasias and various ferns among the undergrowth; and *Deeringia baccata, Scindapsus spp., Luffa graveolens, L. echinata, Vitis spp.* and sometimes *Calamus spp.* among the climbers. Various plants of economic importance are found here. Calamus stems are used for cane sticks, umbrella handles. etc.

6. The northern part of the subdivision Kishanganj, in the north-east corner of Purnea, where the intensity of cultivation has

diminished and where there is less cutting and grazing, contains small remnants of the deciduous monsoon forests that once spread over the whole of the Indo-Gangetic plains. In this area because of rainfall over 80 inches per annum and a favourable temperature throughout the year, there is a lush vegetation. A large number of *lianas* and climbers grow up on the trees, epiphytes are numerous and the under-growth is very thick. The species are those described under pioneer monsoon forests and the following additional ones:—in the top canopy, *Eleocarpus ganitrus,* and *E. Serratus, Sepium sebiferum, Caryopteria wallichiara, Callicarpa arborca, C. marcrophylla, Saccopetalum longiflorum, Ficus spp., Litsea salicifolia, Tectona grandis;* in the lower canopy *Cryptocarya amygdalina, Streblus asper, Alangium lamarkii, Premna flavescence, Symplocos racemosa* and *Caesalpinia digyna* near fringes. The under-growth—*Alpinia calcarata, Amomum dealabatum,* various land orchards, ferns, *Ophio glossum, mosses, Dracena angustifolia, Uraria pulchra.* Lianas—*Derris scandens, Vitis Lanata, V. adnata,* and *V. bracteolata, Calamus tenuis* and other species and annual climbers —*Gloriosa superba, Stephni hernandifolio, Tiliacora acuminata, Cissampeltos pariera* are seen.

(7) The urban area can be studied under some sub-heads—

(*i*) The ruins of the houses show the same vegetation as seen along the roads and railway line followed by those in protected areas. *Ficus spp., Trema orientalis, Fleureya interrupta* are more common. *Pteris longifolia, Adiantum lunulatum* and *Lindenbergia urticaefolia* are common on the old walls.

(*ii*) The rubbish heaps in the towns and villages show a peculiar flora of their own. Such plants whose parts are used for domestic purposes, such as tomato, red chillies, Nigella, *methi,* mustard, *Gynandropsis pentaphylla, Gleome viscosa,* and *Argemone mexicana* are the commonest.

(*iii*) In the towns, in addition to the species grown in the villages, are seen trees such as *Corypha umbraculifera, Cocos nucifera, Areca catechu, Bottle palms, Michelia champaca, Eucalyptus spp., Wrightia tinctoria, Swietenia Mahogany, S. macrophylla, Tectona grandis, Kleinhovia hospita, Eleodendron sertus, Pterospermum acerifolium, Grewia hainsiana, Polyalthia longifolia* and others and they are all

thriving. Some of these are noted for timber, some for medicinal products, some for flowers and others for decoration.

(8) The rest of the district is under cultivation. Where the soil is sandy, but the layer of sand is thin or covered over with silt, and the area never gets inundated, are grown capsicum, *makai, haldi, moong, urid,* sweet potato and other poor crops on the highlands, and paddy and jute on the lowlands. Where the land gets inundated periodically and thus receives the enriching silt, are grown, as soon as water has receded, a crop of late paddy followed by a rich winter crop of wheat, barley, gram and others.

After the rice has been harvested and if the field is not immediately ploughed, it shows the typical rice field flora consisting of *Ammania pygmea, A. indica, Caesulia axillaris, Adenostemma viscosum var latifolia, Herpestia monniera, Limnophila conferts, Lippis nodiflora, Alternanthera seassilis, Cyprus notundus, C. difformis* and *C. flavidus, Pycreus pumilus, Fimbristylis spp., Bulbostylis spp., Paspalum scrobiculatum, Paspspalidium punctatum, Cyanotia axillaris, Commenline spp., Anotis spp.* and *Flosoopa scandens.* Just a few of these are grazed upon by the cattle, the rest serve to conserve the water-supply of the soil for the next crop and on decay add to the humus contents of the soil.

The cultivated trees in the villages are many. They are either grown in groves or isolated. The common trees are mango, jackfruit, guava, *Jamun,* custard-apple and *sahijana,* etc. They are cultivated for their fruits. *Peepal* and *Neem* are common. Palms are very few. Bananas and pine apples are cultivated almost all over the district.

The interesting plants of the district.

The district shows some interesting plants. *Drosera burmannii,* the sundew and *Utricularia stellata* and *V. flexuosa,* the bladderworts, are insectivorous plants. *Piper longum* (Peepar) and *Piper betal* (Pan) grow spontaneously. *Dioscorea spp.* (Khamalu) are common and serve as food for the poor. Among the fruits *Anona reticulata* (anta), pine apples and cocoanut grow. *Tectona grandis* (teak) is wild here.

The salient features of the vegetation of the district.

The district abounds in marshes and swamps, not seen anywhere else in the State. They bear many sud-forming species. The damp hot climate favours growth of plants like cane palm,

cocoanut and pine apples. It is a predominantly jute and rice growing district, and one of the few districts that shows a typical monsoon forest.*

*Forest.

Purnea district was once an abode of monsoon and prairie forests. On the north in the *terai* areas there were dense deciduous forests. As the rainfall in these areas is over 80" a lush growth was encouraged. The principal trees were *sal, sakhua,* teak, *shisham, palas, peepal* and *semal* trees. On the lowlands along with the banks of the Saura and the Kosi there used to be dense forests and various kinds of climbers and dicots and Ferns used to be very common. A plant of economic importance called lamanus stems used to be abundantly found and exploited for making cane sticks and umbrella handles. As mentioned elsewhere Purnea used to be described as the paradise for the sportsmen for wild game and these dense forests near the *terai* were the abode of tigers, leopards, buffaloes, *nilgai* and various species of deer. Purnea was once a good store of timber and old records show that timber used to be supplied to Calcutta during the Company's rule to feed the ship building industry.

The forests and the wild life have almost completely disappeared by now. The last patch to fall to the axe was the Bhauah jungle of Raj Darbhanga about two decades back. It is peculiar

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that now there should be an Afforestation Division in Purnea district to encourage growth of forests.

RIVER SYSTEM.

The river system of the district consists of three distinct parts. To the extreme west and forming the boundaries of the district on the side, the river Kosi, which with its main branches may be called the first part. The Panar or Panwar which has its rise in the north-west corner of the district dividing the district into two equal parts may be said to be other second part. The third part of the river system consists of river Mahananda and Koska and their tributaries. The third part consists of the river Ganga. By far the most important of all rivers of Purnea is the Kosi. The river Kosi has altered its course and it is now much further west. It is formed by Sapt-Kosi for its containing within its limit and having the whole of its drainage carried of by these seven branches of the Kosi. The principal branch is the San Kosi running from west to east which is joined by the other six rivers. These are proceeding from east to west:

(1) Bhotia Kosi, (2) Tamba Kosi, (3) Likhi Kosi, (4) Dudhi Kosi, (5) Arun Kosi and (6) Tambar Kosi.

From Brah Chhatra the river leaves the lower hills of the mountain by three stages in violent rapid and this part is known as Kosi. It first touches on Indian territories in extreme north-east of Bhagalpur district and after a course of few miles along the boundary between it and Purnea enters this district. After coming north of Amchuraghat on debouching into Purnea, it is a large river, nearly a mile wide and for the remainder of its course it exhibits all the features of a deltaic stream running south with many bifurcations and inter-linking till it falls into the Ganges after a course within Bengal of about 84 miles. The main stream runs with swift milky flood dividing the two districts of Bhagalpur and Purnea. When swollen by the melting of snows or by the annual rains, the river overflows its banks and at that time presents an appearance of a broad swiftly flowing sea, for its breadth from bank to bank is often ten and in some places nearly 20 miles across. In the dry season, water always of the same milky hue are confined to innumerable channels, some of which so shallow that one can wade across and others running deep and strong. These streams seem to run at random, diverging here, reuniting there, forming a wide at one place and cutting direct through the sandy soil in other. The catchment area of the Kosi is taken to be about 23,992 square miles. Not only the tract it drains is exceptionally large

but it is also subject to a heavy rainfall, so that the Kosi when debouching in the plains, delivers an enotmous volume of water. The Kosi has long a reputation as a river of ill omen and it is notorious for its rapidity of the stream, the dangerous and uncertain nature of its bed and the desolation caused by its flood. Sweeping down from the hills it brings with it volumes of sand, which it heaps over the surface of the country destroying the productive power of the land, choking the wells and depriving the villagers from their homestead. The river is however, not only destructive. It is actively building up land and in fact, the whole of the western half of Purnea owned its physical characteristic to its agency. The area in which the silt is deposited is probably on an average at least 20 miles wide while the quantity of silt deposit ed is estimated at 37 million tons per annum. The courses of the river Kosi have always been changing and this process is still continuing.

Mahananda.

Mahananda river forms the boundary between Purnea and Bengal. Rising below the Makaldiaram hills in the Darjeeling district it enters direct at Titulia and flows south-west to the Kishanganj subdivision. Near Dulalganj, it receives the river Kanki and its waters are deflected to the south-east of it and then flows south-east of the Sadar subdivision and enters the Malda district a few miles south of Baroi. This river like Kosi is liable to shift its course and many times has changed its course. Its tributaries are Kankai, Panor, Livari Nagar and Balasar.

Ganga.

It generally forms the southern boundary of this district although some detached portions are scattered to the south of its mighty stream dividing the greater parts of its course. The southern bank is high and rocky and the river seems to have the tendency to sweep the roots of the hills, then wind through the northern planes.

RIVER SYSTEM AND WATER RESOURCES.

Kosi.

Kosi has been a very notorious river for changing its course. By far, it is the most important river of Purnea, having more than half of its course passing through this district. This river brings a vast amount of sand and *Kankar* (sand-stone) with it and spreads them on both of its banks, which make the areas very unfertile.

The beds of the river in the plain are very high and the banks rather low. For this reason the inundation always covers vast stretch of land. This river, as has been mentioned by O'Malley in the last Gazetteer is formed by the confluence of seven streams in the east of Nepal. These seven streams form the seven branches of the Kosi and are called the Sapt-Kosi. The principal branch is the Son Kosi running from east to west (not now). The other branches are (*i*) Bhotia Kosi, (*ii*) Tamba Kosi, (*iii*) Likhu, (*iv*) Dudh Kosi, (*v*) Arun, (*vi*) Tambar. At Barahkshetra the river leaves the mountains in a series of cataracts and rapids and touches the plain land. It first touches the north-east portion of Saharsa district (formerly included in Bhagalpur district).

Saura.

It is a principal tributary of the Kosi. It is now merely a dried up river. It rises in some lowlands to the north-west of Jalalgarh and joins the Kosi near Pirganj. The River flows just to the eastern side of Purnea town. This river is also noted for changing its course. There is very dense and tall grass vegetation on its banks, which is a fine abode of wild animals

Mahananda.

It rises below the Mahaldiram hill in Darjeeling district of the State of West Bengal. This is another very important river of the district. This is joined by Kankai, a tributary of it at Dulalganj. Mr. O'Malley has pointed out that "This river is also liable to shifting its course like the Kosi. Between 1880—90 a new branch struck out from Nawabganj three miles south of Dinghraghat flowing through the villages of Bhikhanpur, Katuakol, Himatpur and Bagdobe to Karampur, where it rejoined the main stream. Again from Barsoi it broke eastwards by Pichora, Chandpura, Kajun, Bansgaon and Satwan to join the Nagar at Lagwan". The old and the main stream is navigable up to Kaliaganj, and during the dry season it remains navigable up to Kishanganj. The most important place on the bank of this river is Kishanganj, a subdivisional town and a very important centre of jute trade.

Following are the tributaries of Mahananda on the left bank: (1) The Dank, which rises in the district of Jalpaiguri and flows close to and parallel with the Mahananda and joins it near Kharkhari. (2) The Pitanu rises in the south of *Pargana* Surjapur and uniting with another stream called Ramjan, joins the Mahananda at Sudhain. (3) The Nagar is a boundary river between the districts of Purnea and Dinajpur. It rises in the north-east corner

of *Purgana* Surjapur. It is a very fast flowing river and liable to sudden floods.

On the right bank are: (1) The Balasan is a hill stream and is of the same size as the Mahananda and rises in the Singalia range lying to the west of Darjeeling district. (2) Changa is another hill stream with a clear limpid water and pebbly bed. (3) Burigangi rises from Nepal and joins the Mahananda near Kaliaganj. (4) Mechi is a large stream and is a boundary river between Purnea and Nepal for some miles.

(5) Kankai is another tributary of the Mahananda on the right bank and joins it near Dinghraghat. This is perhaps, the largest and the longest of its tributaries bringing with it a volume of water more than the Mahananda itself. On the east bank it has a tributary called the Ratua which joins it below Kuti. The Ratua has again two tributaries called the Luneshwari and the Kamal. Mr. O'Malley had observed that the Kankai is also a very erratic river, and has been changing its course continually. Twenty years before 1911, the branches passing Danti and places to the east of that village and having made high silt there opened out a new channel, four miles west of Bahadurganj on to the Kamal. Both joined the Ratua just north of Majkuri and made one large stream, which joined the main stream of Kankai near Sisubari or Baisaghat.

Again of late years it has shifted its course from above Bahadurganj and followed a new direction to the east of its old bed. In 1905 it swept away the South Bazar and deposited sand and silt over more than twenty villages. Like the Kosi it also brings with it a vast amount of sand and *Kankar* and leaves them on its beds, raising them up. When there are floods, again it is liable to change its course. This river is also very injurious to the soil. From Majkuri northwards the banks are very low and the beds high. During the rainy season a vast stretch of land is inundated due to the banks being low, i.e. hardly 5'—8' above the beds.

Panar.

This is a combination of so many streams flowing between the Kankai and the Kosi. The main stream rises near Forbesganj This is a tributary of the Ganga and like the Mahananda a very useful river, as it makes its banks very rich in fertilizers. Luxuriant crop of hemp (*Gorsan*) is grown along its banks. At the time when the last Gazetteer was compiled, its main stream flowed

through Kadwa and Hatanda towards the Ganga. From Mr. O'Malley's account of this river it appears that

> in its higher reaches it is called the Parwan or the Panar. On passing Araria, and till crossing the Ganges-Darjeeling road is still called the Panar. After crossing the Ganges-Darjeeling road it becomes the Kankai. Still lower it is called the Gangajuri and finally its lowest channel is called the Burnadi before joining the Ganges at Hayatpur.

Livari and Nagar.

These are the two other important rivers flowing in the west of the district and call for our attention. The Nagar is a branch channel of the Kosi and receives water from its parent stream. The Livari is a large river and a tributary of the Ganga.

LAKES, JHEELS AND MARSHES.

There are no lakes or *jheels,* properly so-called in the district. Marshes are numerous, specially towards the south-east. Some of these marshes become dry during the hot season. There are some others, which are like tanks. There are marshes in the beds of rivers like the Mahananda and Parwan and during floods the marshes merge into river beds. But F. Buchanan and O'Malley mention a number of such marshes many of which are now cultivated.

RIVER KOSI.

The Kosi, known as Kausika in Sanskrit books is one of the most ancient rivers of India and at its debouch in the plains is 3rd biggest river in India being next only to the Indus and Brahmaputra. It drains a catchment basis of some 22,888 sq. miles of which 2,228 sq. miles are under glaciers. Its three main tributaries are the Son Kosi, the Arun and the Tamur and these meet at Tribeni to form the Sapt-Kosi. Below the confluence, the Sapt-Kosi flows in a narrow gorge for a length of six miles to its debouch in the plain near Chatra. Further downstreet, the river runs in a sandy alluvial plain and winds its way southwards traversing the Nepal *Tarai* and north Bihar, exhibiting all features of a deltaic stream with many bifurcations and interlacing with it falls into the Ganga.

The Kosi is notorious for its vagaries and is remarkable for the rapidity of the stream, the dangerous and uncertain nature of its banks and the desolation which its floods cause. The past

history of the Kosi is the history of the different courses which it adopted in successive decades below Chatra. During the last two hundred years, the river has been generally changing its courses in a westwardly direction. It has shifted across a width of over 70 miles. In these movements it has laid waste large tracts of agricultural land variously estimated between 2,000 to 3,000 sq. miles at the rate of movement of river Kosi since 1736 measured on a line passing through Belhi and Purnea. Though the rate of movement has been shown in the statement worked out on an annual basis, the movement does not take place gradually, but is sudden whenever conditions favour it. The river is known to have shifted as much as 12 miles in a single year.

Serial no.	Period.	Period of movement in years.	Distance moved in miles.	Distance moved in miles per year.
1	2	3	4	5
1	1736—1770	34	6.7	0.2
2	1770—1823	53	5.8	0.1
3	1823—1856	33	3.8	0.1
4	1856—1883	27	8.1	0.3
5	1883—1907	24	11.5	0.5
6	1907—1922	15	6.8	0.45
7	1922—1933	11	18.0	1.00
8	1933—1950	17	11.0	0.65

The changes that take place in the courses of the river are not due to the ordinary meandering of the river as a whole. The apparent cause of the rapid changes in the river is heavy silt charge it carries in suspension and the detritus that move along its bed. Above Chatra gorge the river has a very steep slope on a boulder bed, lower down in the plains there is reduction in the gradients and the river tends to form shoals and splits itself. The natural gradient of the country is good enough to carry the silt-free monsoon flow but due to the heavy silt charge the translation takes place. In this process of translation the river Kosi monopolises the courses of various independent *dhars*, viz., Parwane *dhar*, Tilve *dhar* and Dhemra *dhar*. It is now tending to occupy more and more Tiljuga *dhar*, Balan *dhar* and Kamla *dhar* in the lower reaches.

Different proposals for taming the river Kosi have, from time to time, been under consideration of Government. As early

as in the year 1896-97 a conference was held at Calcutta presided over by the Secretary, Public Works Department, Government of India to discuss the question of building extensive embankments to control the swinging of the river. The proposal was considered to be of doubtful efficacy and it was concluded that no steps were feasible for controlling the river with its numerous channels and their elevated beds beyond protecting by short lengths of embankments isolated tracks exposed to its floods.

The subject was again discussed in the 1937 Patna Flood Conference. At this conference the problem centred mainly round "embankments public and private on the plea that embankments did more harm than good and that they merely transferred trouble from one area to another and they gave also a false sense of security".

Nothing further was done due to shortage of personnel and due to the war years until 1946 when a scheme for construction of marginal embankments right from the foot hills of Nepal to Ganga at an estimated cost of Rs. 1,000 crores was formulated

The Government of India to whom the above scheme was submitted referred the same to the then CWING for further investigation. The commission opined that the construction of a storage reservoir in the hills will give effective control over the floods and in addition provide water for irrigation, navigation and power generation. A scheme costing of Rs. 177 crores to construct a dam of unprecedented height of 783 feet at Barahkshetra to impound 6.9 million cubic feet of water was formulated. The scheme was proposed to be taken up in seven easy stages of construction.

The advisory committee appointed by the Government of India to examine the stage I of the scheme, recommended the construction of a dam of lesser height at Belka with an impounding capacity of 1.78 million cubic feet, providing for power generation of 90.000KW, construction of a Eastern Kosi Canal irrigating 14.36 lac acres of land in India and an Eastern Nepal branch canal irrigating 1.82 lac acres of land in Nepal and construction of flood banks.

On further investigation by the Central Water and Power Commission it was seen that the actual cost of Belka dam proposal was much in excess of the cost arrived at by the Advisory Committee and as such the present scheme known as the 1953 scheme was formulated. The scheme as now envisaged consists

(1) construction of a barrage at Hanumannagar at a distance of 30 miles below Chatra to serve as a controlling structure, (2) construction of flood banks on either side of the river, in the right bank extending from Hanumannagar to Jhamta and left bank from Belka to Bangaon; (3) forming a net-work of canal system to irrigate 13.97 lac acres of land in India and 1.8 lac acres of land in Nepal.

The scheme is estimated to cost Rs. 45.90 crores.

In the construction of flood banks on both sides on the river the total quantity of earthwork involved is 6,904.5 lacs cft. out of which 5,316.5 lacs cft. has been completed. Preliminary arrangements for the construction of Barrage are in progress. An access road 26 miles long from Bathnaha a station on the Katihar-Jogbani line to Bhimnagar is being constructed and is nearing completion. A narrow gauge railway line from Bathnaha to Bhimnagar and from Dharan and Chatra to Bhimnagar is being laid. A *pucca* colony costing about Rs. 1.50 crores is under construction at Birpur to house the project staff. The canal system is being investigated and excavation in main canal has also been taken up. The total expenditure until the end of 1957 is Rs. 7,29,35,789.

Benefits anticipated to be received after the completion of the project are as below :—

(*a*) Flood protection for the Kosi ravaged area from Hanumannagar to Bangaon.

(*b*) Prevention of westward movement of Kosi and consequent destruction of buildings and cultivated lands.

(*c*) Irrigation facilities to 14 lac acres of land on the eastern side.

(*d*) Irrigation at a later stage to 6 lacs of acres on the western side of river.

(*e*) Easy all-weather communication between eastern and western districts of Kosi.

(*f*) Avoiding Government expenditure on flood relief measures in North Bihar.

(*g*) Additional food production of 2.26 lacs of tons and jute and sugarcane to the extent of 3.8 lacs of tons.

(*h*) Generation of 5,000 k.w. of power.

THE KOSI PROBLEM.

1.01. *The River.*—The river rises in the Himalayas and drains generally the hilly area east of Kathmandu in Nepal covering the world's two highest peaks Everest and Kinchinchanga. In Nepal the river has seven streams, which give it the name Sapt-Kosi below Tribeni where the three main streams Sun Kosi, Arun and Tamur join. Of these three the Arun rises in Tibet where it is called Phingchu and cuts through a deep gorge in Himalayan range. The Sapt-Kosi below Tribeni, flows through a gorge past the sacred Barahkshetra temple and debouches in the plains at Chatra in Nepal *Terai*. from where it traverses a total course of 450 miles before joining the Ganga at Kursela. The chief tributaries that join the river in the plains are Trijuga, Bhati Balan, Sugarway, Jangar, Balan, Kamla and Baghmati. All of them join the river on its right.

1.02. *Short History.*—The ancient Kaushiki of Vishwamitra, whom he called noble and sacred is the Modern Kosi—Bihar's River of sorrow-identical to Hwangho, Yellow River of China—in its capacity of relentless destruction and producing untold human suffering. About 125 years back the river was flowing just west of Forbesganj, Purnea and Katihar. During the course of one century it has shifted a distance of about 65 miles westward and has in the process devastated thousands of square miles of fertile lands converting them into barren lands. This movement, however, has not been a very gradual one. At times the river has been taking sudden jumps and is known to have shifted 12 miles to the west in a single year. In 1937 the river was flowing just near Supaul and joined the Baghmati course above Dhamraghat. Today it is flowing near Nirmali and Madhepur. During this westerly movement the river has been swinging about a pivotal point opposite Belka Hill nose with its outfall in the Ganga remaining near about the same. It is felt that the river had almost reached its western limit and the future tendency would have been to swing back to the east.

1.03. *Catchment and Geology.*—The total catchment of the Kosi at Chatra is 23,000 square miles out of which Sun Kosi contributes 7,330 sq. miles—32 per cent, Arun 13,330 sq. miles—58 per cent, Tamur 2,228 sq. miles—10 per cent and Sapt-Kosi below Tribeni 112 sq. miles. Out of the above total of 23,000 sq. miles, about 2,200 sq. miles is above snow line.

The total catchment of the distributaries which joined Kosi below Chatra in the plains is about 10,000 sq. miles. Bagmati, contributing 50 per cent.

In the Upper Kosi Catchment the Himalayas is much more compressed, and the rocks are of relatively young in formation. A wide area on either side of Sapt-Kosi between Tribeni and Chatra is a thrust zone, wherein due to folding and faulting accompanying the mountain building activity, the older rock strata underneath have slided over and covered over much younger formation above. This overriding, which is a direct result of highly compressed nature, has generated excessive stresses, which has resulted in considerable shattering of the rocks over the area and its margins. In addition the frequent, seismic disturbances should have added up to the loosening up and disintegration of already shattered rocks in this region. This shattered zone extends over the area through which Sun Kosi and Tamur flow.

On the top of the above geological background, the valley of Kosi is narrow and deep with steep sides and no wider basins to spill and throw off its bad load. There are frequent slips and land slides, which add considerably to the coarse sediment load of the river. The net result is that Kosi collects lot of sediment which it safely brings to the plains, to cause the havoc, for which it has attained an international notoriety. It is in this sphere that it is materially different from its neighbouring Gandak and so also the other north Indian rivers. Evidently the above geological changes must have occurred in between the present and the ancient, which has transferred the Vishwamitra noble and sacred Kaushiki to the Kosi of present day "A river of sorrow".

1.04. *Rainfall and Hydrology*.—The rainfall, in the main catchment varies from 60" on the foot-hills to about 160' on the southern slopes of Central Himalayan range. Further north in the lower Arun basin the rainfall decreases to 40" per year. In upper Arun basin it reduces to 10" only. The average rainfall for the whole Kosi Catchment would be 45". About 75 per cent of this rainfall occurs during the south-west monsoon period, with the maximum in July and August, December gets the least.

The river discharges follow the above pattern of rainfall, with an average peak discharge of 2 to 2½ lacs cusecs during July and August. The maximum discharge recorded was 8.55 lacs cusecs on 24th August, 1954. The average discharge in November and December varies from 20 to 30 thousands and in January to March from 10 to 15 thousands. Due to snow melt the average discharge increases rapidly in April and May to about 25 to 30 thousand cusecs. The monsoon period extends from June to October with average discharges of 70, 140, 160, 120 and 60 thousand cusecs respectively.

The Himalayas not only obstruct and deflects the monsoon currents within the Kosi Catchment, but it also gets disintegrated and washed out in the resulting downpours. The river therefore brings enormous quantity of detritus, both as suspended load and bed load. The Kosi carries an annual average of 95,000 acre feet of sediment load, quantity sufficient to cover about 150 sq. miles of land to a depth of one foot Out of the above Sun Kosi contributes 45 per cent, Arun 28 per cent and Tamur 25 per cent. The percentagewise figure for coarse, medium and fine silt is 15, 27, and 58, respectively. The Arun brings the greatest amount of coarse silt in proportion to total load.

This represents an abnormally high rate of silt yield, higher than that of any other major river in the world for which information is available. Kosi carries about 5 times as much of silt as any other known river. The percentage of coarse and medium silt is about 45 per cent of the total.

The average amount run off in the Sapt-Kosi is about 406 lac acre feet—Sun Kosi 192, Arun 160 and Tamur 86. Roughly 80 per cent of the total run off occurs during the five monsoon months and only 20 per cent in the rest. The run off is the maximum in August and minimum in February.

The bed slope of the Kosi varies from about 5 feet per mile near Chatra to about one foot per mile at its middle reaches and about ½ foot per mile at its tail end. On account of this progressive flattering of the slopes the river is not able to transport all its sediment load received at Chatra down to the Ganga. Boulders, pebbles and shingles get deposited below Chatra for a distance of about 20 miles. The bed fall changes from about 5′ per mile to 3.2 ft. per mile at Balka nose and from here the river starts throwing its sediment load down up to Hanumannagar. This deposition of bed load between Belka and Hanumannagar explains for the braided patterns of the river in this reach. Below Hanumannagar, there is a further flattering of the slope to about 2 ft. per mile. The balance between the bed fall and the bed load is maintained up to 10 to 15 miles below and hence a stable pattern of the river within this reach. Near about Bhaptiahi the bed slopes drop down to a feet per mile with the result that the coarse sediment gets deposited and with the attendant high rate of aggradation the river branches off into a number of interlacing channels, which shift their course from time to time.

To sum up down to Belka nose the Kosi is carrying a heavy super charge of sand by maintaining a very steep slope along the

right bank of Belka Hill which it is gradually erroding. For the next 36 miles, the Kosi is getting rid of a large part of its supercharge of silt, by spreading it to build up the sub-mountain belt, for the next 44 miles it appears to be carrying its charge forward and further downstream there is a sudden flattening of the gradient due to cessation of bed-material upstream at this point.

1.05. *The Kosi Problem.*—So it will be seen that basic problem of Kosi is the silt, which produces spill which in its turn produces enormous flooding. With the modern techniques of dam construction control of spill from peak discharges has become a fairly simple affair but control of heavy amount of silt which is the crux of Kosi problem, has yet puzzled the engineer and unless that is solved the Kosi problem cannot be said to have been completely solved. But, then we could not leave the things as it is. Some solution, if not entirely permanent, has to be found to stop this recurring menace of the river. If not for the many long years to come, something had to be done for the immediate future. Mr. Leopoled and Moddock, American experts who opined on the Kosi problem, have rightly said that this appears to be one of the many instances in which this generation cannot solve the problems of the next generation and its own as well. As a matter of fact no major control scheme anywhere in the world offers complete flood protection or is a permanent solution to a flood problem. The Kosi floods are unusually complicated and any control method must be considered, not only unpermanent, but also incomplete in that it offers a fair measure of protection and not a complete elimination of floods or flood damage.

1.06. *Challenge to Kosi.*—It was in the year 1945 that a definite step towards tackling Kosi was taken. That year Lord Wavell, the then Viceroy and Governor-General of India flew over the Kosi floods and as per his wishes Sri A. N. Khoshla, Chairman, C.W.P.C., submitted the first scheme which envisaged the construction of a high dam for flood control and a barrage at Chatra for irrigation. This was expected to moderate the flood flow to 2 lacs cusecs and had also the potential to generate 2.5 lacs K.W. of electrical power. The total cost was about 177 crores of rupees. The scheme was put before an advisory committee which dropped it, because the dam proposed was in a highly seismic zone, the 20 years period of construction of the dam was too long and the huge amount of cement required was beyond the capacity of Indian cement producing units.

The advisory committee, however, recommended a low detention reservoir of about 90′ height at Belka and a marginal

embankment on the eastern side costing 60 crores of rupees. On detailed investigation it was found that this scheme would cost 90 crores of rupees instead of 60 and it was rather impossible to build a dam of 90′ height on sand foundation. This scheme too was then dropped and then came the 1953 schemes of C.W.P.C. consisting of—

(1)	A barrage at Hanumannagar	17.02 crores.
(2)	Marginal embankments on both banks of Kosi up to Tenghra and Jhamta.	13.57 crores.
(3)	Canal system for irrigation of 13.97 lac acres in Saharsa and Purnea districts.	14.00 crores.
		44.59 Crores.

This was vetted by an advisory committee and was considered to be a possible solution for the immediate relief, so badly needed. The committee did feel that it would not solve the main silt problem completely for which more data had to be gathered and which may require construction of additional structures.

The marginal embankment would prevent the spill and the subsequent flooding, by restraining the river flow within the levies. The barrage would trap the coarse silt by flattening the gradient upstream and would provide a control point. Besides the above it would help diverting the river waters for irrigation. The irrigation would be done through a main eastern canal, four branches, *viz.*, Budhma, Jankinagar, Purnea and Araria and a net-work of distributaries. Power to the tune of 20,000 K.W. will be generated.

1.07. *Control of Silt.*—The control of silt has to be done in a very rational and planned manner One of the reasons for ruling out the high dam proposal was also the fear of its trapping all the silt, which would result in heavy retrogression below and thereby introducing unstable conditions. Proper land use, control of forests fully plugging, revetment, construction of check dams in Kholas and other soil conservation measures in Kosi catchment may help a little but it is felt that real effective control could be only had by construction of dams on the main tributaries—Sone Kosi, Arun and Tamur or on the Sapt-Kosi itself. Quantitative knowledge of sediment transportation during flood and its effect on river regime is not known at present. It is therefore not possible to clearly assess

the optimum control of silt charge and the number of dams to be constructed to achieve the same. The sediment has to be decreased gradually and its effect on the river regime studied. This will give also valuable experience which will help in planning the expensive tributary dams. The Hanumannagar barrage will permit such experience to be gained. The barrage has been designed for a flexible operation which will enable us to maintain any bond level up to an afflux of 10 feet on normal floods. By gradually raising the bond the river regime shall be studied and correlated with field sediment observation and laboratory research.

The soil conservation measures will be carried out by the Control Soil Conservation Board which is setting up a demonstration-*cum*-research centre at Chatra to begin with.

1.08. *Modification of* 1958 *Scheme*.—The barrage in the above scheme consisted of a main barrage and a diversion barrage. The main barrage would pass 9 lacs cusecs and the diversion 50,000 cusecs. The diversion barrage was provided to give a flood relief of 50,000 cusecs to the embankments by diverting the above amount of discharge in old Kosi *dhars*, on the east of eastern embankment which had to be resuscitated. This diversion could be done even when the flood discharge crossed 2 lacs cusecs. The discharge records from 1948 to 1956 showed that the discharge in the river exceeds 2 lacs cusecs for an average of 9 days in a year. The detailed investigations revealed that the cost of resuscitation of *dhars* would be about 8 crores, nearly 4 times those contemplated in 1953 scheme. This has offset the benefits which are disproportionately very small and the diversion scheme together with resuscitation of *dhars* has been dropped. Two channels Dhemra and Bhamga will however be kept alive for the drainage of the area.

The omission of diversion scheme also opens the possibility of introducing irrigation between Bhenga *dhar* and eastern embankment covering an additional acreage of about 4 lacs in the district of Saharsa. The project has further irrigation potential which can be extended to irrigate an additional acreage of 1.38 lac acres in Purnea district between rivers Panar and Mahananda and 6.14 lac acres in the Darbhanga district west of the western embankment ultimately raising the total annual irrigation from 14 lac acres to 21.39 lac acres. This would also improve the financial return of the irrigation scheme.

1.09. *Execution of the Scheme.*—Since the immediate relief from the extensive spill was arrived at the construction of embankment was taken up all at once and the first sod of earth on the Western embankment was put by late Dr. Sri Krishna Sinha, Chief Minister of the State on 14th January, 1955, Makar Sankranti day, amidst a tumultuous welcome of large crowds of people, and the construction of embankments commenced. Public co-operation was enlisted through B. S. S.* who helped to get the land for embankment and borrow pits ahead of the land acquisition proceedings. The B.S.S. also took up the construction with the help of local population and they have done about 40 per cent of the total work. The strength of labour reached a peak of 60,000 a day. Only a part was available locally and the rest had to be imported. Living conditions were acute and abnormal. A programme of labour amenities in the form of housing, water-supply, medical aid and recreation, etc., were introduced to maintain the requisite strength and get the best response from the labour force.

Late rains last year created waterlogging of borrow areas which prevented resumption of work till December and thereafter the general election. The alignment of the lower portion of western embankment was changed after model tests with the sole object of placing a number of populous villages on land side but an unfortunate controversy arose resulting in some interference of work but for which the full programme of embankment construction of about 150 miles would have been completed. As it is about 80 per cent is over and the balance would be completed soon. Nirmali has been protected by constructing a ring bund and with its numerous rice mills booring up, the town is regaining its old prosperity.

A large number of permeable and impermeable spurs have been constructed where the river velocities were high and the embankments faced danger of direct attack. No breach has taken place and the levies have successfully stored a flood of 3 lacs cusecs last year protecting an area of 3-4 lac acres, which used to be the victim of recurring spill. Excellent crop is now growing in this area. 26 masonry sluices out of a total of 34 have been completed. These will help the drainage channels to drain themselves in Kosi without the fear of back flooding.

The barrage is to be built 3 miles upstream of Hanumannagar in Nepal. The countryside had all the characteristics of

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*Bharat Sevak Sangh.

typical Himalayan *Terai*, i.e., complete negation of communications and transport facilities, prevalence of an extremely unhealthy climate and manifestation of wild animals and above all a completely sandy terrain built by the silt load of shifting channels of Kosi. The nearest reach is Bathnaha at a distance of about 30 miles. To establish communications a road-*cum*-rail link covering four major bridges has been constructed from Bathnaha to Bhimnagar on the left bank of the river. For the construction of main colony a suitable plot of land could only be found four miles off at Birpur, where construction of all the offices, officers' and staff quarters, school and hospital is fairly underway. The main labour colony and stores railway terminus are located at Bhimnagar where an extreme small patch could be found and formed up. A landing ground has been constructed and the various construction sites linked up with telephone.

The aggregate will be brought from Dharan 40 miles off in Nepal and the Riprap from Chatra about 30 miles off. All these quarries being located in cut off and isolated places jeepable access was first built through thick forests and thereafter construction of a narrow gauge railway line to bring those materials is nearing completion. The diversion of the river has been achieved closing the Raniganj *dhar* and the construction of right guide bund, ring bund, etc. has now commenced.

Work on the canals is also now going ahead. The construction of main canal has started in different reaches and 3.3 lacs cft. of earthwork have already been done. The construction of Budhma and Jankinagar branches is about to begin. The investigations of Purnea and Araria branches are underway and so also the design of various canal structures.

Actual statement on drought, emergency irrigation, distribution of seeds, foodgrains and requirement of funds for the district of Saharsa.*

A -Statement of Rainfall.

——	Sadar.	Supaul.	Madhipura.	Average for the district.
1	2	3	4	5
Rainfall in 1956-57 (April to October). ..	54.14"	71.03"	62.40"	62.40"
In 1957-58 (April to October). ..	17.27"	13.62"	33.82"	21.80"

* As the work comprises what is to be done for Saharsa as well, these figures are quoted (P.C.R.C.).

B—*Statement showing Percentage of Loss in Harvest in 1957-58.*

Extent of loss in various crops in 1957-58				
(a) Aghani paddy ..	83%	98%	98%	93.7%
(b) Bhadai paddy ..	73.3%	46.2%	42.8%	80 4%
(c) Maize ..	23%	12.8% (excess produce)	..	10% (excess produce)
(d) Marua, etc. ..	65%	50.4%	99.7%	79%
(e) Jute ..	34%	69%	..	35 2%
Total extent of loss taking all crops together.	71.1%	80.4%	77%	75%

C—*Statement showing total yield of principal food crops from the year 1956-57 and estimated yield in 1957-58.*

——	Aghani paddy	Bhadai paddy.	Maize.	Other Bhadai crops.	Total.
1	2	3	4	5	6
1956-57	24,69,575	2,45,737	1,34,916	2,32,276	30,82,504
1957-58	3,60,200	98 000	1,73,000	85,250	7,16,450
Loss in mds.	21,09,375	1,47,737	(38,084) increase	1,47,026	23,66,054

DISTRICT SAHARSA.

D—*Progress of Emergency Irrigation measures following failure of last Hathia rains.*

——	Madhepura	Supaul.	Sadar.	Total.
1	2	3	4	5
No. of tube-wells and pumping sets, etc, functioning—				
1. No. of pumping sets working ..	3	4	6	13
2. No. of tube-wells working ..	8	9	25	42
3. No. of river bundings under the Emergency Scheme.	3	7	1	11
Area irrigated in acres—				
1. By pumping sets ..	150	200	300	600
2. By tube-wells	225	250	725	1,200
3. By river bunding, etc. ..	10,000	13,000	160	23,160
Total ..	10,375	13,459	1,185	34,960

CHAPTER II.

HISTORY.

EARLY HISTORY.*

"The earliest inhabitants of the district are believed to have been Angas to the west and Pundras to the east. The former are generally grouped with the Bengal tribes in the epics, and formed the easternmost tribe known to the Aryans in the time of the *Atharva-samhita*. The latter are classed among the most degraded classes of men in the *Aitareya-brahmana*, one of the oldest Brahmanas which was written before 1000 B.C ; but it is also stated that they were descendants of the sage Viswamitra, which would seem to imply that they had Aryan blood, though degraded This opinion survived in the epic period, for in the *Mahabharata* and *Harivansa* the Pundras and Angas are said to be descended from the blind sage Dirghatamas, who was born of the queen of the demon Bali; and according to the *Manu samhita* they sank gradually to the condition of Sudras because they neglected the performance of sacred rites and did not consult Brahmanas Apparently, therefore, the Pundras were too powerful to be left out of the Aryan pale, but had rites and customs so different from those in the home of Vedic Brahmanism that a theory of degradation was set up.

"Some passages in the *Mahabharata* (*Sabha-parva, Adhyaya* 30), describing the conquests of Bhima in Eastern India, furnish further information about the inhabitants of this part of the country. Bhima, it is said, conquered Mahanja king of Kausiki-kachcha, a tract lying between Modagiri (Monghyr) and the land of the Pundras, which is thus identifiable with South Purnea. He also defeated Karna, the king of Anga, conquered the hill tribes, killed the king of Modagiri (Monghyr) in battle, and next subdued the powerful Pundra king, Vasudeva, who is described as the king of the Vangas, Pundras and Kiratas. The Pundra land appears to have been bounded on the east by the river Karataya; on the west by the modern Mahananda, which separated it from Anga; on the south by the modern Padma; and on the north by the hills, which were inhabited by aboriginal

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*Quoted from L. S. S. O'Malley's *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911).

hill tribes, such as the Kiratas.* Local tradition still speaks of the struggles and conquests of the Kiratas, and a Kirata (Kiranti) woman from the Morang or Tarai is said to have been the wife of Raja Virat, who, according to legend, gave shelter to Yudishthira and his four Pandav brothers during their 12 years exile. The site of his fort is still pointed out at Thakurganj in the north of the district.**

"At the dawn of history the district west of the Mahananda apparently formed part, with Bhagalpur, of the kingdom of Anga, while its eastern portion was included in Paundra-vardhana, the name now given to the land of the Pundras. Anga was an independent kingdom till the sixth century B.C., and there are traditions of war between it and Magadha. During the life-time of Buddha it was annexed by Bimbisara, the ambitious ruler of Magadha (*circa* 519 B.C.), and it appears never to have regained its independence, the Raja of Anga in the time of Buddha being simply a wealthy nobleman, of whom nothing is known except that he granted a pension to a Brahman.† Thence forward, its history is merged in that of the Magadhan empire. Paundra-vardhana also was included in that empire, the *Asokavadana* recording the fact that Asoka put to death many naked heretics of that country who had done despite to the Buddhist religion. In later times the district formed a part of the empire of the Imperial Guptas, which extended as early as the reign of Samudragupta (*circa* 340 A.D.) to Kamarupa (Assam) and Samatata (East Bengal) on the east. The Gupta empire was shattered

Notes on the Geography of Old Bengal, J. A. S B (May 1908), IV 267--70

**"The puranic definition of Tirabhukti would bring under this name the modern districts of Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Champaran, North Monghyr, North Bhagalpur and a portion of Purnea (to the west of the river, Kosi) and a great tract of land to the north of these districts generally called Nepal Tarai."

(*History of Tirhut* by Shyam Narain Singh, p. 2.)

"The boundary of Mithila comprises the modern districts of Muzaffarpur Darbhanga, Champaran and parts of the districts of Monghyr, Bhagalpur and Purnea."

(*History of Tirhut* by Shyam Narain Singh, p. 3.)

Biratapura

"In this connection it may also be mentioned that in the Sabha Parva of the Mahabharata, it is stated that Bhima went beyond the river Kausiki (Kosi), but it is nowhere said in the Mahabharata that he came across any place called Biratapura before crossing the river Kosi which is the easternmost boundary of Tirhut in the Purnea district."

(*History of Tirhut* by Shyam Narain Singh, p. 30.)

†T.W. Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India* (1903), pp. 23-24.

by the invasion of the Huns, and Purnea appears to have passed into the hands of Baladitya, king of Magadha, who in alliance with other kings, and in particular Yaso-dharman of Central India, defeated and captured the Hun king, Mihiragula. Mihirgula later killed Vajra, son of Baladitya and extinguished the viceregal family of the Dattas of Paundra-vardhana (Political History of Ancient India by H. C Roy Choudhury, p. 597; Early History of Northern India by S. K. Chatterji, p. 200).

Bhutivarman of Kamrupa possibly had put an end to the Imperial Guptas in the Paundra-vardhana region in 6th century A.D. (Early History of Northern India by S. K. Chatterji, p. 263).

"A brief account of Paundra-vardhana and its people has been left by Hiuen Tsiang (Yuan-Chwang), who visited it about 640 A. D. It has a flourishing population and was studded with tanks, hospices and flowering groves. The land was low and moist with abundant crops and a genial climate.* In coming to this country from the west, the pilgrim had to cross the Ganges; and in going from it eastward, he had to cross a large river. The province was thus evidently bounded on the west by the Ganges with the Mahananda, and on the east by the Karatoya.** The country west of the Mahananda as far as the Gandak was occupied by the Vrijis, a confederacy of tribes, who had come in from the north many centuries before and held the tract between the Ganges and Nepal. They were divided into several clans, and General Cunningham conjectures that Purnea may have been one of their capitals, but had long been absorbed in the Magadhan empire. According to Hiuen Tsiang, the soil of their country was rich and fertile, the climate rather cold. Its inhabitants were quick and hasty of temper, and most were heretics, but a few believed in Buddha.†

"At the beginning of the seventh century the tract now included in the district seems to have been under Sasanka; the powerful king of Gauda (Gaur), who held both North and South Bihar as well as Central Bengal. He was a worshipper of Siva and hated Buddhism, which he did his best to destroy. He dug up and burnt the holy Bodhi tree at Bodh Gaya, broke the stone marked with the footprints of Buddha at Pataliputra, destroyed the Buddhist convents, and scattered the monks carrying his persecutions to the foot of the Nepalese hills. Harsha, the great

*S. Beal, *Records of the Western World*, II, 194-5.

***Notes on the Geography of Old Bengal*, J. A. S. B. (May 1908), IV, 271.

†S. Beal, *Records of the Western World*, II. 77-80; *Ancient Geography of India* (1871).

Buddhist emperor of that century (606—647), determined to crush Sasanka, and about 620 A.D. succeeded in doing so during the course of his conquest of Northern India, in which, says Hiuen Tsiang, 'he went from east to west subduing all who were not obedient; the elephants were not unharnessed, nor the soldiers unhelmeted'. After the death of Harsha, his empire was dismembered; and it seems likely that Purnea became a part of the Magadha kingdom under Adityasena (*circa* 660 A.D.).* From the 9th to the 12th century it was under the Pala kings, and on their decline became subject to the Senas.

MUHAMMADAN RULE.

"At the end of the 12th century the Musalmans under Bakhtiyar Khilji burst down upon Bengal sacking Bihar and Nadia, the capitals of Bihar and Bengal. Leaving Nadia in desolation, Bakhtiyar Khilji removed the seat of Government to Lakhnauti (Gaur), and from that centre Ghiasud-din Iwaz (1211--26) extended the limits of the territory held by the Musalmans. The whole of the country called Gaur, as well as Bihar, passed under his control, and his rule was acknowledged by the surrounding tracts, including Tirhut, which all sent tribute to him. Purnea must, therefore, have come under Muhammadan rule in the first quarter of the 13th century. The north of the district seems still, however, to have been held by the hill tribes of Nepal, and Purnea was long regarded as an outlying province whose revenues were sufficiently burdened in protecting itself against their incursions. So little is known of the district until the 17th century that not even the names of its *faujdars* or military Governors have been recorded. It is only known that it formed the frontier *sarkar* of Muhammadan Bengal and that in the war between Sher Shah and Humayun it supplied the latter with some levies.

"During the Mughal rule Purnea formed a great military frontier province under the rule of a *faujdar*, who was nominally subordinate to the *Subahadar*. In his revenue capacity of *amildar*, he was independent of the *Diwan* of Bengal and rendered no account, the greater part of Purnea being held in *Jagir* for the maintenance of himself and his troops. From the *Ain-i-Akbari* it appears that the present district was included in *Sarkar* Tajpur east of the Mahananda and *Sarkar* Purnea west of that river. Within its limits were also two *mahals of Sarkar* Audumbar and one *mahal* of *Sarkar* Lakhnauti in the south, all these *sarkars*

*The Shahpur image inscription of Aditya Sen gives him the date A. D. 672-73 (Dynastic History of Northern India by H. C. Roy, Vol. I, p. 274).

belonging to *Subah* Bengal, and west of the Kosi five *mahals* of *Sarkar* Mungir (Monghyr) in *Subah* Bihar; while the northern strip formed a part of the then independent kingdom of Morang. The old Kosi, it should be explained, was at this time the boundary between Bengal and Bihar and continued to be the boundary till the 18th century, when the five *mahals* of *Sarkar* Mungir were annexed to Purnea. Towards the end of the 17th century, Ostwal Khan was appointed *Faujdar,* with the title of Nawab and united in his person the command of the frontier army and the fiscal duties of *amil* or superintendent of the revenues. He was succeeded by Abdulla Khan, who was vested with similar powers. About 1680, Asfandiyar Khan became Nawab of Purnea, and held the office for 12 years. He was succeeded by Babhaniyar Khan, who ruled until his death in 1722, when Saif Khan was appointed Governor. With him the authentic history of Purnea may be said to begin.

Governors of Purnea.

"*Saif Khan.*—The new Governor, Saif Khan, was a nobleman of high lineage, being the grandson of Amir Khan, a famous Governor of Kabul, and a connection of the imperial house. He was sent to Bengal by the Emperor Aurangzeb at the request of the then Nawab of Bengal, Murshid Kuli Khan, who wished to bring this outlying portion of the province under more effective control. At that time the writ of the Mughal did not run to the west beyond the Kosi, the main stream of which seems to have flowed close to the town of Purnea and then due south into the Ganges near Karagola. Beyond it lay the territory of Bir Shah, Raja of Birnagar, who had a force of 15,000 men and did not acknowledge the Mughal authority. To the north the boundary was not far distant from Purnea and was held by hill tribes, who waylaid and plundered all travellers who ventured to pass that way. To check their predatory raids a fort had been built at Jalalgarh and a commandant placed in charge of it. It was, in fact, a frontier fort, estimates for the fortifying and garrisoning of which, dating from about this period, are still in existence. From Jalalgarh the boundary ran eastward, passing a little north of the confluence of the Mahananda and Kankai to the most southern point, where the present *pargana* of Surjyapur touches the district of Dinajpur.

"The Nawab, having obtained the services of Saif Khan, conferred upon him the office of *Faujdar* of Purnea and commandant of Jalalgarh, making him a grant of *Parganas* Dharampur or Birnagar and Gondwara, as well as the *mahals* constituting the

jagir of the commandant. Saif Khan soon found that their revenues were very small and complained to the Emperor. Aurangzeb then wrote to the Nawab: "I have sent you a caged lion. If he does not get his food, he will give you trouble." Murshid Kuli Khan took the hint, remitted all arrears of revenue, granted him other concessions befitting his rank and station, and gave him full power to consolidate his rule and extend his domains without any increase in the revenue payable to the State. Saif Khan took full advantage of the opportunity, and can soon have had little cause to complain of an empty exchequer. He overran Birnagar, expelled its disloyal chief, Drujan Singh, son of Bir Shah, and thoroughly subjugated his territory. According to Mr. J. Grant, Birnagar included all the lands west of the old channel of the Kosi and was annexed in 1732. *He next brought other refractory *zamindars* to book, imprisoning them and forcing them to pay revenue, so that he soon realized 18 lakhs per annum in place of the 10 or 11 lakhs previously collected, retaining the surplus under the agreement with the Nawab. He also forced the hill tribes back to the *Tarai*, cleared the jungle, extended the northern frontier some 30 miles further north, and brought under cultivation the waste lands that extended to the foot of the hills. In this way, we are told, 'he enlarged the country and its resources, and day by day the strength of his Government, of his finances and of his army increased'.**

"In all his ventures he appears to have been well supported by the Nawab, who furnished him with troops when he wanted them. He was on terms of close friendship with the latter, in spite of the fact that he had refused to marry his grand-daughter, Nafissa Begam, because her lineage was inferior to his own: Murshid Kuli Khan was the son of a poor Brahman, who, when a boy, was bought by a Persian merchant, who had him circumcised and educated. Every year the Nawab invited him to spend some time at Murshidabad and would rally his guest on his ways. One of his peculiarities was the method he adopted for paying his troops, which was by giving one half of their pay in money and the other half in goods, either plundered, confiscated or bought up cheap. Another was his practice of rewarding his favourites by giving them his cast-off mistresses—a dubious favour, which earned him the sobriquet of *zen* Baksh, i.e., the bestower of women, instead of the more common title for a liberal man, *Zer Baksh* or bestower of gold.†

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*Fifth Report (1812, reprinted at Madras in 1883), I, 302.

***Riyazu-s-Salatin* (translation, 1904), pp. 36-7.

†Stewart's *History of Bengal* (1847), pp. 238-39.

"In 1740 Ali Vardi Khan rose in revolt, and Saif Khan, under-estimating his power, and thinking that he would be supported by the imperial forces, gave out that he himself would march against him and punish his rebellion. He quickly realized his mistake, and, to cover it, counterfeited madness. Ali Vardi Khan, who knew of his powerful connections at the imperial court, was only too pleased to overlook the matter; and we find that in 1749, when Ali Vardi Khan marched to Patna to quell a revolt of the Afghans, Saif Khan sent him a levy of 15,000 musketeers which rendered good service in an engagement with the Marathas at Sultanganj. On his return from Patna, Saif Khan invited Ali Vardi Khan to visit him in his own territory, where he had prepared a magnificent camp and costly presents; but this invitation was refused by the Nawab, who was offended at Saif Khan never coming to his court at Murshidabad, though he had regularly visited his predecessors. Saif Khan, accordingly returned to Purnea, where he died next year (1750)

"*Fakhr-ud-in Hussain Khan.*—He was succeeded by his eldest son Fakhr-ud-din Husain Khan (also called Nawab Bahadur), who is said to have no talents or capacity for Government and to have been a bad son and a bad brother. He seized the vast treasure accumulated by his father during his thirty years of office, consisting of jewels said to be of inestimable value, as well as a large sum of money, and also despoiled his brothers of what they had. The Nawab, hearing of his oppressive conduct, appointed in his stead his own nephew and son-in-law, Saiyad Ahmed Khan, also called *Saulat Jang*, i.e., the impetuous in war. Saiyad Ahmed Khan set out at the head of 3,000 horse and 4,000 foot, and Fakhr-ud-din, realizing the hopelessness of resistance, went quietly to the Nawab's court at Murshidabad and made his submission. Soon afterwards, during one of the Maratha invasions, hearing an exaggerated account of a mutiny in the Bengal army, and thinking that the Nawab's power was at an end, he escaped from Murshidabad and joined his forces, which he had left encamped on the Mahananda. Thence he marched on to Purnea, but as soon as Saiyad Ahmed Khan advanced to meet him he retired to Malda. There his incapacity and cowardice soon became apparent. His troops began to desert him and he remained inactive, until Ali Vardi Khan sent a small force, which took him and his treasure to Murshidabad, where he was kept under surveillance. In this way says the author of the *Sair-ul-Mutakharin*, the Nawab 'at one and the same stroke took possession of that

**Sair-ul-Mutakharin*, I 357, II, 47-8, 73-4; *Riya.u-s-Salatin*, pp. 36--38; C. Steward, History of Bengal (1847), pp. 238-39.

immense heap of money and jewels that had been amassing for half a century together" Fakhr-ud-din eventually managed to escape again with the help of the Marathas and made his way to Delhi, where he died soon afterwards.*

"*Saiyad Ahmed Khan*.—Saiyad Ahmed Khan had been appointed Governor of Orissa in 1741, but had proved a failure. He alienated his troops by reducing their pay and the Oriyas by his exactions from their *zamindars*, by his dissolute manners, and by taking their women for his *zanana*. The people rose in revolt, and put Saiyad Ahmed in prison, from which he was rescued by Ali Vardi Khan who marched south to re-establish his authority. In 1749 he was made Deputy Governor of Bihar but this appointment aroused the jealousy of Ali Vardi Khan's favourite grandson, Siraj-ud-daula. Ali Vardi Khan was induced to instal Siraj-ud-daula in the place of Saiyad Ahmed Khan, who was then consoled by being made Governor of Purnea. In this office he did much to redeem his reputation. He gave up the depraved habits of his young days, and instead of passing his time among dancing women, he attached to his person friends distinguished for their birth, virtue or knowledge. He was careful to go through the daily round of prayers, like a good Musalman, but at the same time he was a jovial soul, who could enjoy the fun of the *Basant Panchami*. Rising an hour before daybreak, he performed his devotions, and then sat in state in the court hall. There he held public audience twice a week, being accessible to every suitor. On Friday he abstained from all business, but on the other days of the week he devoted himself to it. His method of business was as follows. He sat in a private room, to which none were admitted but some old women of the *zanana* and some trusty eunuchs. His courtiers, secretaries and heads of the different offices remained outside, sending in by an eunuch any paper requiring his signature. These papers he perused in silence, and returned when he had passed orders on them. Fair copies were then made and despatched, courtiers being always ready in attendance. At 10 A.M. he had his dinner, from which he would send selected dishes to his friends. A siesta followed, then came the mid-day prayers and some reading of the *Koran*. At 3 P.M. he came into the public hall and discussed science and religion with the Maulvis for two hours. Then he gave audience to his friends for an hour, after which he spent some time with the ladies of his *zanana*. At night came his fourth prayer, after which he was entertained by actresses, dancers and singers, or by hearing some curious and diverting story or tale, which lulled him to sleep, and this was at about 9 or 10 O'clock.

**Riyazu-s-Salatin*, p. 359, *Sair-ul-Mutakharin* II, 74, 76, 78, 85.

'This rule of life', wrote the author of the *Sair ul-Mutakharin*, 'held regularly the whole year round without exception. He was naturally a sweet-tempered man; and civility was so natural to him, that for full seven years, in which I have been in his service, I never remember to have heard him say a harsh word to any one (whether high or low), or to have seen him guilty of an improper action'.*

"As regards the character of his rule, 'this prince governed for full seven years the province of Purnea with absolute power: but yet with so much equity and attention to the welfare of the subject, that both the nobles and husbandmen were exceedingly pleased with his government, and at all times ready to give it their applause. Retired in a corner, at a distance from the great roads to and from Hindustan, he had no occasion at all either to wage war or to travel. So that his travels went no farther than Rajmahal, whither his uncle, who was very fond of hunting, used to repair almost every year: and sometimes he proceeded as far as Murshidabad, to see his brother, Nawazish Muhammad Khan, and his nephews and nieces, as well as the princesses of his family. Nor did he ever set out from Purania in a military equipage but on two occasions; the first time it was to oppose Fakhr-ud-din Hussain Khan, that ill-advised son of Saif Khan; the other, it was to chastise Sheikh Muhammed Jalil, *zamindar* of Purania, who enjoyed a good estate and a great revenue, but who was undone for having listened to the suggestions of senseless, ignorant friends, by whose counsels he excited troubles, proved refractory, and demolished his own welfare and family. Elsewhere we find that Muhammad Jalil was the *zamindar* of Khagara and a staunch Shia. The expedition against him took place in the middle of the rains and was a short one, for his troops refused to stand by him. He and all his family were taken prisoners, his estate was confiscated, and he himself died in prison. His son was, however, allowed to regain the estate, in order that he might bring back the cultivators and repeople the half ruined country'.**

"Towards the end of his life, Saiyad Ahmed appears to have engaged in intrigues to secure possession of Bengal on the death of Ali Vardi Khan, which was daily expected, as he was an old man and had long been suffering from acute dropsy. Calculating on such a contingency, Saiyad Ahmed opened up negotiations with the Grand Vizier of the Emperor Alamgir II for the grant

*Sair-ul-Mutakharin, II, 136.

**Sair-ul-Mutakharin, II, 141-42.

of the viceroyalty of Bengal, and devoted the resources of Purnea to collecting a large army with which to oppose the claims of Siraj-ud-daula. In 1756, however, a few months before the death of Ali Vardi Khan, Saiyad Ahmed died and was buried at Purnea in a garden called the Jafaribagh. He left a great treasure behind him, consisting of jewels, furniture of silver and gold, precious fabrics, camels, elephants, etc., and at least 45 lakhs in the treasury. Raymond, the translator of the *Sair-ul-Mutakharin*, indeed, estimates that his property was worth over a crore and that his annual savings were over 20 lakhs. 'Add to all this', he wrote, 'the standing expenses for seven thousand infantry and as much cavalry, the artillery, a fleet of boats; a numerous court receiving salaries; a seraglio of five hundred women; a table, splended; and infinity of yearly clothes and jewels; as well as a legion of pensioners that received from five to a thousand rupees per month; and this aggregate of expenses cannot be rated at less than forty lacs more; in all sixty lacs—and the translator has been assured by writers of his treasury that his revenue amounted to fifty-eight lacs. Fifty-eight lacs! Here is then a decay incredible, as being past all computation and all conjecture, for although some fifteen years ago Razi-ud-din Muhammad Khan used to transmit yearly from thence eleven lacs to the treasury of Murshidabad, it is certain that Purniah cannot yield now (1786) above six or seven lacs a year'.

Shaukat Jang—Saiyad Ahmed Khan was succeeded by his son Shaukat Jang, who had been Grand Master of Artillery at Purnea under his father and afterwards at Murshidabad under Ali Vardi Khan. The latter, it is said, recognized his succession, and in order to pacify and, if possible, buy off such a formidable claimant to the throne, bestowed on him the whole of Purnea as a revenue-free *Jagir*. Shaukat Jang, at any rate, did no oppose the succession of his cousin, Siraj-ud-daula, but waited for an opportunity to assert his claims. No sooner, however, had he succeeded Ali Vardi Khan than Siraj-ud-daula determined to make his own position secure by removing this rival from his path, and with that purpose set out against Shaukat Jang in May, 1756. He arrived at Rajmahal, but got no further. His soldiers were afraid to cross the Ganges, believing that Shaukat Jang had been reinforced by the imperial troops; while his captains dissuaded him from attempting a campaign in the rains when the country would be under water. Shaukat Jang himself was taken by surprise; instead of taking the field, he begged his *mullahs* to avert invasion by their prayers, and sent a message to

Siraj-ud-daula acknowledging him as his suzerain. Siraj-ud-daula then marched back to attack the English, his campaign ending with the massacre of the Black Hole.

"Shaukat Jang had merely temporized. The conspirators at Murshidabad under Mir Jáfar Khan, the Bakshi or Paymaster, begged him to put himself at their head, depose Siraj-ud-daula, and rule Bengal. Shaukat Jáng lent a ready ear to their suggestions. Vain and loquacious, he openly talked of his scheme and boasted that, after subduing Bengal, he would conquer Oudh and place on the throne of Delhi an emperor of his own liking He would then march to Lahore and Kabul, and make his home at Khorasan, as the climate of Bengal did not suit him.

"At this juncture, his father's intrigues bore fruit, for he received from the Grand Vizier a *pharman* or commission authorizing him to take and rule Bengal as Viceroy, on condition that he sent to Delhi the confiscated treasure of Siraj-ud-daula and remitted annually three crores of rupees as tribute. 'On the receipt of that patent, his pride, which had already reached to the sphere of the moon, now rose to the sun's orb, and he commenced picking up quarrels with principal officers and commanders of the old court.* Most of them were dismissed or degraded, his officers were nearly driven into mutiny; while his soldiers were alienated by his telling them : 'I am not such a fool as Ali Vardi Khan, who gave his men leave to take everything found in an enemy's camp. When I conquer Bengal, my men will not have a handful of straw beyond their pay.'

"News of his intentions reached Siraj-ud-daula, who, in order that he might have some one on the spot to watch his movements, granted the *parganas* of Birnagar and Gondwara to a Hindu favourite named Ras Bihari, sending Shaukat Jang a letter to apprise him of the grant. Shaukat Jang passionately resented this interference with his authority, beat the messenger who brought the letter, and sent a characteristic reply, which he first had read out in Court. 'His reply was brief and to the point: 'I have received from the Imperial Court a patent of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa; but as the same blood runs in your veins and mine, I will spare your life and grant you a retreat in any part of the province of Dacca you like. Retire there, and leave the palace and treasury to my officers. See that you send your answer promptly, as I wait it with one foot in the stirrup.' This letter was enough to enrage a less passionate man than Siraj-ud-daula, who decided to deliver his answer at once and in person. He

*Sair-ul-Mutakharin, II, 197.

ordered Raja Ram Narayan, the Governor of Bihar, to march on Purnea from Patna, while his own army advanced from Murshidabad, in two divisions, one of which under his own command, marched up the right bank of the Ganges, while the other, under his Diwan Raja Mohan Lal, followed the left bank of that river.

Battle of Baldiabari.—"When Shaukat Jang was informed of the advance of Siraj-ud-daula, he ordered his officers to select a strong position for his army. Some of them, who had served under his father and were experienced soldiers, selected a position at Baldiabari between Manihari and Nawabaganj, which could easily be defended against a superior force. In front was a chain of deep morasses, over which there was only one narrow causeway, while the country was open behind, so that supplies could easily be obtained. The advantages of the position were, however, largely sacrificed by the troops being encamped at great distances from one another; for Shaukat Jang refused to entrust the command to any one else, and did not know how to marshal the forces himself. When at length he did arrive on the field, he morosely refused to issue explicit orders to his officers, but directed them to return to their positions and there await his commands. When an old Afghan officer drew his attention to the utter disorder that prevailed, and described to him the orderly battalions which Nizam-ul-malk, the great commander of the Deccan, led into battle, his only answer was to call that general a fool, and to say that he wanted no advice, as he had already fought three hundred battles.

"While the army was waiting for his orders, Mohan Lal's division came in sight and commenced a cannonade. The smaller guns were out of range, the shots falling into the morass, but the larger pieces commanded Shaukat Jang's camp. Seeing this, Syam Sundar, who was in charge of the artillery, with more courage than prudence, quitted the entrenchments and advanced over the causeway to reply to the enemy's fire. Shaukat Jang, thereupon, sent a message to the commander of his cavalry taunting him with his inactivity. This officer pointed out that no horse could attempt to cross the marsh and live. Shaukat Jang replied by contemptuously comparing the conduct of his Musalman horsemen with the courage of the Hindu scribe, as he called Syam Sundar. The cavalry thus taunted determined to cross the morass at all hazards, and soon were struggling through its thick mud, while the artillery of Siraj-ud-daula, from the other side, poured volley after volley into them. Shaukat Jang did not join them, but, having taken his usual dose of *bhang*,

retired to his tent, and amused himself with the songs and dances of his *harem*. While he was thus engaged, the battle went against him in all directions, his artillery being silenced and his cavalry cut to pieces.

"At this critical time, some of his officers came to him, and placed him on an elephant, with a servant to support him, as he was reeling with intoxication and could not sit upright. While he was advancing, a musket ball struck him in the forehead and killed him (16th October 1756). According to one account, he met his death while trying to charge a body of troops in which he thought he saw Siraj-ud-daula. The latter, however, did not take part in the battle, but remained in the rear, sending Miran, the son of Mir Jafar Khan, dressed like himself to deceive the enemy.*

"After the death of Shaukat Jang his forces made little further stand, though they appear to have given a good account of themselves, in spite of their disadvantages, one account saying that Siraj-ud-daula had 5,000 killed and wounded.** The battle ended with the fall of night, when Shaukat Jang's forces dispersed, unpursued by the enemy, and without hindrance from the peasants of Purnea, who were not courageous enough to come down in numbers, and plunder the living or strip the dead, 'as they do in Hindustan'. †Two or three days later Siraj-ud-daula returned in triumph to Murshidabad, appointing Mohan Lal as Governor.

"Thus miserably perished Shaukat Jang, leaving the way clear for Siraj-ud-daula. Further, in the words of the *Sair-ul-Mutakharin*—'The rash valour of the young Nawab of Purnea, in delivering Siraj-ud-daula from the only enemy he had to fear in the country, made it clear to all Bengal that the English were the only power which could bring about the change that every one was longing for.'

Character of Shaukat Jang.—"An instructive account of his character has been given by Ghulam Hussain Khan, the author of that work, who was attached to his court. He has as little good to say of him as he has of his cousin Siraj-ud-daula, and finds in their folly the working of fate. 'It having', he says, 'been decreed by providence that the guilty race of Ali Vardi Khan should be deprived of an empire that had cost so much toil in rearing, of

*S. C. Hill, *Bengal in* 1756-57, I, cvii, II, 53.

**S. C. Hill, *Bengal in* 1756-57, II. 54.

†*Sair-ul-Mutakharin*, II, 214.

course, it was in its designs that the three provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa should be found to have for masters two young men equally proud, equally incapable, and equally cruel, Siraj-ud-daula and Shaukat Jang.' He was in a good position to judge, for he was the personal adviser of Shaukat Jang. He gives a quaint account of his duties in that capacity. 'Like the Vizier (i.e., the Queen) in the game of chess, I was close to a wooden king, that could neither think nor act by himself. I was obliged to read him lessons about signing papers, giving audience, and supporting a character in public. He could neither read fluently nor write legibly; so that I was obliged to be both school-master and his minister. I was obliged to direct his pen, teach him that *Aba* was written with two *as* and a *b*, and tell him how to join *a* to the next letter, and a syllable to a syllable, and how to keep his words asunder.'*

In spite of his ignorance Shaukat Jang was inordinately vain. One day, for instance, on receiving a petition addressing him as *Alam Panah* or Refuge of the World, he gave orders that that should always be his official title, and actually informed the Grand Vizier of the Emperor that, if he was addressed in any other way, he would tear the letter to shreds and give no answer. 'As to his morals, although he did not seem vicious, yet he dressed and spoke like a woman; but this did not prevent him from abusing, in low and obscene language, every one whatever, without distinction, and that, too, in the fullest hall of audience ....To mention all his ridiculous and thoughtless actions would require volumes; and a pity it would be to consume ink and paper upon such a subject.'**It is difficult to resist the conclusion that Shaukat Jang suffered from megalomania.

Khadim Husain Khan.—"Next year, after the death of Siraj-ud-daula (July, 1757), a small revolution took place at Purnea. Hazir Ali Khan, who had been Superintendent of the Hall of Audience to Saukat Jang, took possession of the town, imprisoned Mohan Lal and seized the treasury. In this he was supported by Achit Singh, who had for some time held the *parganas* of Tajpur, Sripur, Gondwara and Karagola, and was now made his Prime Minister. Both were popular with the people of Purnea, who, says the author of the *Sair-ul-Mutakharin*, 'are exactly the counterpart of those of Bengal, those tame, cowardly wretches, at all times so crouching and so ready to submit to any one that offers. No one will wonder at Hazir Ali

*Raymond's translation (reprint of 1902), II, 189, 194, 196.

***Sair-ul-Mutakharin*, II, 203-4.

having brought into his views both the troops and inhabitants.'* On receiving news of this revolt, the new Nawab, Mir Jafar Khan, prepared to set out to crush it, though he was reluctant to do so, as he wished to march to Patna against Ram Narayan, the Governor of Bihar. He, therefore, readily granted the request of Khadim Husain Khan, who, representing that he wished to 'better his fortunes in the little corner of Purnea', undertook to quell the rebellion if he was made Governor. Khadim Husain Khan was no stranger to place, for he had been in the service of Saiyad Ahmed Khan, being, indeed, sent by him to take possession of Purnea of his first appointment. He had lately distinguished himself by his brutal conduct towards the mother of Siraj-ud-daula, having her beaten off when she flung herself on the dead body of her son.

"He did not find much difficulty in establishing himself in Purnea. Hazir Ali Khan raised his levies, mostly untrained men, but, trusting in the predictions of an astrologer, made no attempt to move from his entrenchments. His troops, moreover, were afraid to face the army of about 7,000 horse and foot under Khadim Husain Khan, but deserted daily, and, when Khadim Husain Khan advanced against them, fled without striking a blow. Hazir Ali Khan escaped to Nepal, and in December, 1757 the new Governor made his entrance, unopposed, into Purnea, where he took up his abode in the palace built by Saiyad Ahmed Khan. One of his first measures was to have the nose of the astrologer cut off, he then proceeded to enrich himself by confiscating property and levying heavy contributions from the *zamindars;* and in a short time the district was brought under his complete control.

"In 1759 the new Governor became embroiled with Miran, son of Mir Jafar Khan, who resented his assumption of an independent position. Miran marched north with an English force under Clive to face the Shahzada (afterwards the Emperor Shah Alam), who had invaded Bihar and called on Khadim Husain Khan to meet him. The latter led an army southwards to Karagola, and, to make himself doubly secure, obtained a guarantee of safety from Clive, as he suspected treachery on the part of Miran. They then had an interview in the middle of the Ganges, each being in a separate boat, and were reconciled by the mediation of Clive. The truce, however, was a hollow one, for Miran threatened to have Khadim Husain Khan removed from his post, while the latter withheld all payment of revenue, marched across the Ganges with a force of 6,000 men, and

*Sair-ul-Mutakharin, II, 251.

threatened to throw in his lot with the Shahzada. This threat was effectual, and he received a promise that he should remain Governor, on which he returned to Purnea.

"A few months later (May, 1760) he was in open revolt and made ready to join Shah Alam. To raise troops he extorted money from all he could get in his power, whether high or low, and, before leaving Purnea, literally plundered the town and district. In this way he managed to increase his army to 6,000 cavalry, 10,000 infantry and 30 guns. He at first intended to go by river, and for that purpose collected a number of boats; but Major Caillaud, getting wind of his intention, seized them and had them burnt with the ammunition and stores on board. Khadim Husain Khan was consequently forced to march north of the Ganges to Hajipur, where he hoped to effect a junction with the Emperor. There, however, he was attacked by Captain Knox, who marched across the river with a small force, consisting of 200 Europeans and a battalion of sepoys, which could not have exceeded 800 men, 5 field pieces and 300 of Shitab Roy's cavalry. The Purnea troops, as they advanced, filed to the right and left, and, having completely surrounded this little band, commenced the attack. The battle lasted for six hours; column after column of cavalry charging down on the English detachment, which steadily received them with a discharge of grape or at the point of the bayonet. On one occasion the little party were nearly overwhelmed, but a brilliant charge of the grenadiers of Knox's own battalion repulsed the enemy and saved their comrades. At length, tired of these fruitless attempts, which had been attended with considerable loss, Khadim Husain Khan was compelled to retreat, leaving behind him 400 dead on the field, three elephants and eight pieces of cannon, which fell into the hands of the victors. Not contented with this success, Captain Knox continued to follow up the retreating enemy until evening closed in upon him, capturing a number of their ammunition waggons, which he blew up on the spot. The loss of the English on this occasion was remarkably small, for only 16 Europeans were killed; the number of sepoys is not stated.*

"After this reverse, Khadim Husain Khan retreated northwards into Champaran closely followed by the allied forces under Miran and Major Caillaud, which succeeded in making him give battle on one occasion. The battle ended in a rout, the Purnea troops losing all their artillery and being compelled to abandon their heavy baggage and a large quantity of ammunition. The

*A. Broome, *History of the Bengal Army*, I, 300-1.

pursuit, however, had to be abandoned, for one night Miran* was killed by lightening, and Major Caillaud then determined to return. Khadim Husain Khan was thus left free to effect his escape through the Tarai to Purnea (June, 1760)

Last days of Muhammadan Rule.

"For three years after this we hear nothing more of the Governors of Purnea. Under Mir Kasim Ali the Governor was Sher Ali Khan, who when war with the English broke out in 1763, led all his available forces to join the Nawab at Udhua Nullah, leaving his brother as Deputy Governor of the district

"This state of affairs was taken advantage of by Rohi-ud-din Husain Khan, a son of Saif Khan, who was in receipt of a small salary at the Nawab's court. Suspecting that the Nawab's downfall was certain, he left Monghyr in an old leaky boat and made his way to Purnea. Arriving there at dead of night, he made himself known to Mehdi Beg, his father's old *Maulvi*, and then went down the Saura river, where he kept himself and his boat concealed. As soon as he heard of the defeat of Kasim Ali at Udhua Nullah, he returned to Purnea and gathered his adherents around him. Before dawn, he put himself at their head and marched to the palace, where the Deputy Governor was hiding with a few soldiers. The latter had no alternative but to surrender, and quietly submitted.

"It was probably this Deputy Governor, or his br[illegible] Ali Khan, who proved a good friend to four English[illegible]ts, prisoners of Kasim Ali Khan, who were among th[illegible]w that escaped the massacre of Patna. These four men (three of whose names are known, viz., Davis, Douglas and Speedy) had been sent to Purnea and 'placed under the charge of the Nawab of that district. When Kasim Ali had determined upon the destruction of his prisoners, he sent orders to Purnea for them to be put to death. The Nawab, who happened to be a humane, good man, and being highly pleased with the conduct of the sergeants whilst with him, declined putting the orders in execution. He, however, wrote to Kasim Ali, entreating that he would recall his

*"In the year 1760 the Emperor Shah Alam who was incited to overthrow the growing influence of the British East India Company was engaged in the invasion of Bihar and Khadim Husain Khan, the Governor of Purnea, marched to Join him with an army composed of 6,000 horse, 10,000 foot, and 40 pieces of cannon . Captain Knox followed up this blow by defeating the Governor of Purnea at Hajipur and Khadim Husain fled precipitately northwards towards Bettiah."

(*History of Tirhut* by Shyam Narain Singh, p. 98.)

[This foot note is ours —P.C.R.C.]

mandate, because he feared, if he was still determined upon it, it would be a difficult matter (as the men were beloved by all his people) to find one that would undertake the task Kasim Ali, on receipt of the letter, flew into a violent rage, and directed another order to be sent to the Nawab, in which he told him, if he had not spirit himself to put his command in froce against those raithless and treacherous Englishmen, to send them immediately to Patna, where ample justice should be done for the crimes they had committed. On this letter being delivered to the Nawab, he sent for the sergeants, and with tears in his eyes informed them of the severe order he had received, and of the steps he had taken to preserve their lives; that he must now send them to Patna, where he hoped by the time they got there, the rage of Kasim Ali might be cooled, and that they might probably escape death.' They were accordingly sent in a boat down the old Kosi with a guard of 13 men, but when the boat had reached the Ganges, they succeeded in overpowering the guard, and in making their way to Udhua Nullah, where they joined the British army under Major Adams.*

"Rohi ud-din Khan, having received the submission of the Deputy Governor, met with no opposition. The people of Purnea welcomed him with *nazars*, and the revolution was peacefully effected. He next seized a boat laden with treasure for Monghyr, which had put in close to the crazy vessel in which he had come to Purnea, and then sent letters to Major Adams and Mir Jafar Khan, acknowledging the latter as his master, and congratulating both of them upon their successes 'Mir Jafar Khan, sensible that the war was far from being at an end, was pleased to see so much strength and revenue deducted from the enemy's scale; and he sent to the new Governor a letter, in which he extolled his character for what he had done, and bestowed upon him the Government of Purnea. The new Governor, being strengthened by this accession of authority, established his government everywhere, treated both the people and gentry with the utmost benignity; and, firmly keeping his seat on the stead of fortune and good luck, he continued to ride in the fields of command and success for a number of years together; nor did he lose his seat, but when Muhammad Reza Khan came to be promoted to the office of Deputy Governor of Bengal.†' He appears to have been superseded for one year (766-67), by Suchet Rai, who was deputed from Murshidabad to collect the

*A. Broome. *History of the Bengal Army*. Vol. I, p. 392; App. p xlvi.

†*Sair-ul-Mutakharin* II, 516-17.

revenue, and to have been succeeded by Razi-ud-din Muhammad Khan. The last of the Governors was Muhammad Ali Khan, who was replaced in 1770 by Mr. Ducarrel, the first English Supervisor or Collector."

EARLY BRITISH RULE.

The early years of British rule were years of trouble for Purnea. The district suffered terribly during the great famine of 1770, the magnitude of which will be realised by referring to the report of the Famine Commission The Famine Commission was appointed by a resolution of the Government of India, dated 16th May, 1878. The Famine Commissioners wrote about the famine of 1770 :—

"In October, 1769, very gloomy reports were received from Behar and North Bengal. In November the Collector-General 'saw an alarming prospect of the Province becoming desolate' and the Government wrote home (November 23) to the Court of Directors in the most alarming terms They resolved to lay up a six months' store of grain for their troops and sent in December to Dacca and Backergunj to buy rice for Behar....In 1770 the distress was acutest in Behar; efforts were made, not very successfully, to obtain grain from the British Officers at Allahabad and Fyzabad, but it is probable that private trade was active."

With regard to the effects of the famine the Report says—

"The loss to the country in material wealth cannot be calculated; the loss of life is believed to have been greater than has occurred in any subsequent or historical famine. In the north of Purneah the European supervisors believed that half the *ryots* were dead; the Resident of Behar calculated the famine mortality at 200,000 in Ma the Resident of Murshidabad in June estimated that by that time three-eighths of the population of the province had died; in July 500 died daily in that town; in Birbhum 'many hundreds of villages are entirely depopulated and even in large towns not a fourth of the houses are inhabited'........ The estimate made by the Council in November, 1772, and officially reported after its members had made circuits through the country in order to ascertain

> the state of things accurately, was that one-third of the population had died, and this, as Mr. Hunter remarks, implies the death of about 10 millions, as the whole population of Bengal in those days can hardly be estimated at less than 30 millions. .... That the mortality was extremely great, there can be no doubt: and its effects were visible for many years afterwards in the lowered revenues, the immense untilled areas, and the competition that arose among landholders to induce cultivators to settle on their estates."

There was scarcity in 1783 again. This scarcity did not affect the district of Purnea badly but is important from one point of view and that is this scarcity in Purnea and other districts that led the Government to frame a plan and a possible mode of its execution for preventing future famines in India Sir George Campbell's account of the Famine of 1783 mentions that—

> "It was decided that buildings of solid masonry should be constructed to serve the purpose of perpetual granaries to the two provinces, Bengal and Behar, and the Chief Engineer prepared a plan for a circular building in Patna which still stands as a monument of past resolutions, bearing its inscription 'For the Perpetual Prevention of Famines in India,' but empty and disused."

This building known as *Golghar* is still a landmark in Patna. In 1783 the Government appointed a Committee with very drastic powers to prevent future famines but we have nothing on record to get an idea of the effects of their labours

The next scarcity in Purnea was in 1791 and the rice crop was almost an entire failure. The later years of economic distress have been discussed elsewhere

At the time when Purnea passed into the hands of British in 1770, Mohammad Ali Khan was the Governor of Purnea; he was replaced by Ducarrel* who was the first English Supervisor or Collector of Purnea. Purnea continued as a district under the Board and by Regulation I of 1817 Purnea was placed under the authority of Behar and Benaras Board of Commissioners which also had authority over the districts of Ramgarh and Bhagalpore. In 1872 the district was transferred to the control of the Calcutta

*Also *see* Civil disturbances during the British rule in India, 1765-1857, pp. 13-14 by Dr. S.B. Chaudhury.

Board of Revenue along with some other districts. By Regulation I of 1829 twenty Commissioners of Divisions were created and Purnea along with Malda was included in the Bhagalpore Division. In 1834, the Burdwan Division was abolished and Malda was then transferred to the Bauliah Division, which was later called the Rajshahi Division. Purnea continued to be under the Rajshahi Division till 1893 when it was again transferred to the Bhagalpore Division. In 1905 Purnea district was again placed under the Rajshahi Division. Purnea came back later to the Bhagalpore Division and has continued to be under the Bhagalpore Division since then.

Because of the troubles of the early years of British rule characterised by famines and epidemics, there was great difficulty in establishing the land revenue administration on a firm basis, and, to add to the troubles of the British officials, there was constant trouble along the northern frontier. The last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* mentions : "In October, 1788 one of the Nepalese *sardars* raided the village of Churli, carrying off one of its inhabitants. The remonstrances of the British succeeded in securing his release, but he had been so brutally handled, his wounds mortifying and being full of maggots, that he died a few days later." "This affair," it was reported, "has caused a general alarm along the frontier, and I am very certain if it is overlooked, the consequence will be a total desertion of that part of country, for no man will choose to hold his life and property at the mercy of a set of inhuman barbarians, which without the protection of Government must be the case in future." A fortnight later the Collector reported to the Board of Revenue another outrage committed by the Nepalese and wrote : "The conquest of Morung by the Goorca in defiance of Mr. Hastings's order to them not to cross the Cossy, the assassination of the young Rajah of Morung who had taken protection in Purnea, and their repeated ravages on our frontier, by which the revenue had at times suffered considerably, having been overlooked or not resented, have given them such an opinion of the moderation and forbearance of our Government, that nothing but a decisive step will be sufficient to restrain them within proper bounds." Again in 1793, we find that a band of *fakirs*, said to be 'of the same descriptions as the *fakirs* who for some time have been in the habit of plundering in the eastern provinces,' came in from Nepal, raided several villages on the boundary and made an unsuccessful attempt on one of the frontier posts."*

*J. Byrne, *Purnea Settlement Report* (1908), App. V, pp. XL—XLV.

Purnea's connection with Nepal dates from the earliest times because of a brisk trade that existed between Nepal and Purnea district. Purnea was one of the important Indian districts along with Dehra Dun, Gonda, Basti, Gorakhpur, Bharaich in Uttar Pradesh and Champaran, Darbhanga, etc. in Bihar that carried on a good turnover of business with Nepal. Dr. K. C. Chaudhuri in his *Anglo-Nepalese Relations* has observed that "Trade between the district of Purnea and Nepal had long been of great importance. The export-import trade was of the same nature as between the other Indian districts and Nepal."* He further observes that one of the chief trade routes to Nepal was Phulwari *via* Teragach to Chailghazi.

It has to be remembered as early as on May 21, 1771, Mr. Keighly Chief of Darbhanga had drawn the attention of the Patna Council to the situation of the Tauter *Pergunnahs* bounded by Champaran, Purnea, Gandak and the *Terai*. He had mentioned that the *Pergunnahs* properly belonged to the Sircar Tirhut and the Raja of Nepal had held the tenure on a nominal *Peshakash* of Rs. 12,000 per annum, but that again he paid at his pleasure. He desired the Patna Council to take measures for the extension of the Company's boundaries to their lawful limits. We are not directly concerned with the later vicissitudes a good account of which has been given by Dr. K C. Chaudhuri in his *Anglo-Nepalese Relations*. The Council ultimately did not sanction military action against the Gurkha Raja but desired that the claim to the annual tribute from him was to be kept up. Thus although an open rupture between the Company and the Gurkha Raja was avoided, border troubles between the two countries continued and Purnea being one of the border districts had to bear quite a lot of brunt. In 1770 Mr. Ducarel, the English Supervisor or Collector at Purnea had reported that Budh Karan, who had been the *Dewan* of the deceased Raja Kamdat Singh of Morung, was plundering the Company's frontiers and putting the Company. subjects to flight. Ducarel's suggestion was to extend the influence over Morung by rendering military assistance to Regonaut who was opposing Budh Karan. Dr. K. C. Chaudhuri observes that Ducarel "thought that only four battalions of the Company's troops would be sufficient for the purpose and those parts which would be liberated from the occupation of Budh Karan could be possessed by the Company themselves. Such a course, to Mr. Ducarel's mind. was certainly to be beneficial to the Company in more than one

***Anglo-Nepalese Relations* by Dr. K. C. Chaudhuri, Calcutta, 1960, p. 7.

way. It would not only secure the Company's borders from incursions from the hills, give the English possession of the Saul forests, fires and spices, but place them at the channel of supply to the hills. Another benefit that would arise out of it was that it would prevent the Sanyasis from ravaging the districts of Bengal by blocking their way. This would also give them control over boats and ferries in the area.

The Select Committee was in favour of following more or less a consistent policy of not rendering any military assistance to any of the contending hill Rajahs unless it was necessary for maintaining the interest of the Company. They, therefore, ordered immediate security arrangements for the bordering districts of the Company's territories by proper deployment of troops but deferred consideration of the question of military assistance to Reconaut to a future time when it might become absolutely imperative. This was how the Regonaut episode ended."*

Kirkpatrick's mission to Nepal preceded by Dewan Bhim Shah and Deenath Upadhyaya's efforts in Patna had some effects. Kirkpatrick was also commissioned to induce the Nepal Government to pay stricter attention to the commercial treaty signed on March 1, 1792. The Anglo-Nepalese commercial treaty signed in 1792 was more or less ineffective as the treaty was treated as a scrap of paper whenever necessary.

"This is borne out by the complaint made by one Mr. Pagan who had settled as a cultivator and merchant on the frontiers of Purnea towards Morung. In his complaint to Mr. Ducan, Resident at Benares, he wrote to say that he had sent some merchandise through Nepal to Tibet, but no sooner the goods had passed the Company's boundary and entered Nepal than the collectors of the Sayer and Badary therein stationed refused to let his merchandise pass without exaction of the former dues so that Mr. Pagan has been obliged to bring back his goods."†

Purnea also figures prominently when Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan was deputed to Nepal after the virtual failure of Kirkpatrick's mission. Abdul Qadir Khan was briefed partially by papers sent by the Collector of Purnea. One of the important instructions of the Maulvi was to look into the question of the adjustment of the boundary disputes between Morung and Nepal.

**Anglo-Nepalese Relations* by Dr. K. C Chaudhuri, Calcutta, 1960; pp 50-51

†*Anglo-Nepalese Relations*, by Dr. K.C. Chaudhuri, Calcutta, 1960, p 72.

The freebooting *Fakeers* who were repeatedly making incursions into the Company's territories were also to be looked into.

There was a mutual complaint that robbers were taking up their abode in Morung and in Nepal and carrying on depredations whenever suited. Gajraj Misra, the Guru of the Raja of Nepal played an important part in procuring the invitation from the Raja of Nepal to the Maulvi to proceed to Nepal and the fourth object in sending Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan was "to communicate with you in respect of settling the boundary between Morung and Purnea which you are so desirous of". Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan and his party reached Kathmandu in July or early in August, 1795. The Governor-General had pointed out to the Raja that orders have been issued to the Collector of Purnea to adjust the Morung boundary in exact conformity to the Raja's application upon that subject. The same anxiety to seek the co-operation of the Nepal Government for an equitable adjustment for the boundary disputes and the subjects of the Company on the frontiers of Purnea and Tirhut is also seen in the later mission of Capt. Knox. This co-operation was very much needed to bring the criminals to justice.

The last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* by O'Malley mentions :—

> "The aggression of the Nepalese continued during the next century. In 1808 the Gurkha Governor of the Morang seized the whole *zamindari* of Bhimnagar. This flagrant encroachment could not be overlooked, and in June, 1809 a detachment of troops was sent to the frontier. The Nepalese, yielding to the threat of an immediate appeal to the sword, evacuated the land next year. In 1814 the first Nepalese war broke out, and Major Latter, with a force of 2,000 men, was sent up to defend the Purnea frontier, and to give the Raja of Sikkim every assistance in expelling the Gurkhas from the eastern hills, short of an actual advance of troops. The presence of this force was effectual in preserving the peace of the frontier, and communications were kept up with the Raja of Sikkim. No fighting appears to have taken place, with the exception of a night attack on a post stationed at Mudwani. This attack was repulsed, after the Gurkhas had fired the tents and baggage, and the post was evacuated next day. In 1817, after the conclusion of the war, Major Latter concluded a treaty with the Sikkim

> Raja at Titalya, by which the British granted the latter all the land between the Mechi and the Tista which had been ceded to them by the Nepalese."*

For facilitating the communication of intelligence between the several military officers commanding detachments and posts on the frontier of the district of Purnea along with Rungpore, Tirhoot, Sarun, and Goruckpore, it was thought expedient as a measure of temporary convenience that the Dawk Establishments on the frontier of those districts, should be placed under the exclusive and immediate control of the Magistrates. The Magistrates were instructed accordingly. The relevant documents will be found in an extract from the Proceedings of the Honorable the Vice-President in Council in the Judicial Department under date the 21st February, 1815, which is available in the Old Correspondence Volume of Sarun for the year 1815.

There are also some important letters in the National Archives at New Delhi, Foreign, 1838 Department Secret, Consultations in 2nd August, nos. 11-14 which refers to the constant plundering of Purnea district by bandits from beyond the frontier. There also used to be incursions into the Nepal territory by robbers from Purnea and other districts on the borders In 1871 it was felt necessary that the whole boundary north of the Purnea district should be surveyed and boundary marks be renewed. A fresh survey was necessary as when survey was made last, the river Kusi† flowed between Bhagalpur district and Morung, the whole river belonging to the latter. It was observed that the river has since changed its course and now flows several miles inward and fresh re-surveying and re-demarcation of the line in presence of the officer from Nepal Government was necessary (Foreign Political August 1817, nos. 324-344). Some of Abdul Qader Khan's records are available in the Pre-Mutiny Records preserved in the Central Records Office, Allahabad. Some of them also refer to the depredations of the *fakirs* (religious mendicants) in Purnea and other parts of the Company's Provinces and that after causing depredations they took residence in Nepal. One such letter no. 70 is a translation of the letter from the Raja of Nepal to J. Lumsden.

A letter from the Collector of Purnea, dated the 13th August, 1790 was forwarded by the Board of Revenue to the Governor-General in Council with the recommendation that it be proposed

*H.T. Prinsep, *Political and Military Transactions in India* (1825), Vol. I, pp. 78-79, 85, 121, 130, 207.

†*The old spelling has been maintained here* (P.C.R.C.).

with the Nepal Government that the abolition of all duties on the Morung and Bengal commerce be reciprocal as obviously promising mutual advantage. This letter is in the Resident's Proceedings and preserved in the Central Records Office, Allahabad. The Collector of Purnea had also mentioned that the herdsmen went with a large number of cattle to graze in Morung and a considerable revenue accrued to Morung by the grazing duty. The Collector proposed that the *Chowkis* (*Fundis*) had been discontinued under apprehension that they would be considered as *Rehadari*. The Collector now proposed that the *Chowkis* be re-established on the Morung frontier to collect duty to be imposed on imports generally or on both imports and exports as the Board shall approve Another letter of the Collector of Purnea, dated the 19th July, 1799, to J. Duncan, Resident at Benaras, in the same Volume preserved in the Central Records Office, mentions about the timber trade between the *ryots* of Morung and Purnea. John Pagan, as inhabitant of Purnea wrote a letter to J. Duncan, Resident at Benaras, which was considered by him on the 19th September, 1791, as is found in Volume no 18 for 1791 (*Basta* no. 32, Record no. 48). In this letter Pagan referred to the possibility of a commercial negotiation with the Government of Nepal and he wanted to emphasise importation of rice into Nepal. The memorandum attached to Pagan's representation is an extremely interesting document. It is not known as to how he could come to the figures. He mentions that in 1789-90 the price of the rice sold in the Eastern Morung amounted to Rs 1,25,000. He suggested that the Collector of Purnea should be authorised to regulate the importation of rice from Morung in a regulated manner. Valuable data will be available in pages 169-178 of *Benaras Affairs* (1788-1810), Volume I, by Dr. G. N. Saletore, Director of the Central Records Office, Allahabad, regarding the particulars of duties collected at the different stations under the Nepal Government and also in the district of Purnea. The question of goods duty was again gone into and it was decided that about the duties on goods exported from the dominions of Nepal, His Excellency, the Raja of Nepal, shall be levied at the established stations in the several districts including Purnea through which they shall first pass, and *Rowannahs* be thereon granted. In a document no. 102 of 1842, transcript of old Correspondence Volume in Champaran Collectorate (July, 1842 to December, 1842), there is a copy of a letter from the Resident of Nepal to the Magistrate of Champaran mentioning that "owing to the repeated representation of the officers of the Dacoity Suppression Commission upon this frontier (Oude, Goruckpore

and Purnea) he had issued a strict order of which a copy was enclosed and he wanted to learn the actual fruit of this order." It was mentioned in that letter that "there is no part of India where so great facilities exist for the concealment and harbourage of large bands of dacoits as in the Nepalese Territories and you need not be reminded by me that it is the anxious wish of Government that these facilities should be counteracted by our united efforts and those of Major Sleeman's Assistants in this quarter".

The next event of great importance is the insurrection in 1857. O'Malley mentions in the last Gazetteer "Since that year the peace of the district has only been broken by the Mutiny of 1857. On its outbreak, there was no little anxiety regarding the loyalty of the troops stationed just across the border at Jalpaiguri, viz., the 73rd Regiment of Native Infantry and a detachment of the 11th Irregular Cavalry. As a precautionary measure, permission was given, in October 1857, to Mr. Kerry, an indigo planter, to raise a corps of Nepalese, and in November 100 sailors under Captain Burbank were sent to Purnea to protect that place in case of a mutiny of Jalpaiguri. At the end of November news came that some companies of the 73rd Native Infantry had broken out at Dacca, and it was expected that they would march to Jalpaiguri and raise the troops there. The Commissioner, Mr. Yule, promptly left Bhagalpur, taking with him a detachment of 50 men of the 5th Fusiliers, then stationed at Monghyr. Marching to Purnea, he joined forces with Captain Burbank and moved to Kishanganj as the point from which he could most readily and effectually act in any direction. With him went all the Europeans in the Division, planters, civil officers, etc., all well mounted and armed, forming a by no means insignificant body of most willing and cheerful volunteers. In a few days Mr. Yule had collected not less than 80 elephants, and with his little army was ready for anything that might happen. On the 4th and 5th December two different detachments of the 11th Irregular Cavalry mutinied and went off. On the 9th news reached Kishanganj that they had passed to the south of that place. Mr. Yule, putting his men on elephants, marched all night, and arriving in Purnea (40 miles distant) before daylight, met the *sowars*, as they were leisurely marching into the place. They refused to face his force, and retired a few miles. The Commissioner followed, and on the 11th came up with them just as they were preparing to march. On this occasion they fought with a resolution worthy of a better cause, some of them charging up to the steady little squares which formed in admirable order to receive them, and falling dead on the bayonets. In the end, they retired under

cover of a heavy fog, carrying with them many wounded. Not a single casualty occurred on our side.

On the morning of the 12th the Commissioner, having received information that the *sowars* intended crossing the Kosi to Nathpur, started to intercept them, and in 45 hours accomplished the 50 miles to that place, including the crossing of the Kosi with its numerous and extensive quicksands. Here he halted a few days and learnt that the *sowars* had entered the Nepal Tarai, and were at Chatra, 36 miles to the north. They were, therefore, out of reach, and as he had received an express from Jalpaiguri, urgently requesting aid against the Dacca mutineers, he determined to move in that direction *via* Kishanganj. In 36 hours he had covered the 64 miles to Kishanganj, and on the 22nd December he proceeded to Titalya, and thence to a post between Siliguri and Pankhabari. Having waited there till the 26th without further intelligence, he determined on moving to Chawa Ghat on the Tista, where the mutineers from Dacca were expected to cross. On nearing the *ghat* he came in sight of the enemy's encampment in a position unfavourable for an attack, and withdrawing into the jungle, established his force on the path by which, as he was told, they must pass. They evaded him, however, at night, taking, an unfrequented bye-path, and on the morning of the 28th he learned that they had crossed the Mahanadi and were making for the Darjeeling road.

Mr. Yule, leaving his camp standing, took up a position on the road, and after waiting some hours and seeing nothing of them, had just ordered his men back to camp, when the rebels were seen crossing the road at a little distance off. So rapid was their rush cross the small open space from jungle to jungle that Mr. Yule's advanced party had only time to fire a volley, which killed one straggler, before they again disappeared in the jungle, and the pursuit, which Captain Burbank continued for two to three miles, was hopeless and unsuccessful.

The fugitives having thus made good their escape into the forest, Mr. Yule moved, parallel with them, on its outskirts, to prevent their making any inroad into Purnea, and reached the Kosi opposite Nathpur on the very same day that they effected a junction with the *sowars* at Chatra. An attack on their position at Chatra failed, in consequence of the rebels making a sudden retreat across the Kosi at a most difficult ford, where many of their horses, unable to reach the opposite bank, were abandoned. Major Richardson, who was watching the opposite bank lower down, was too late to intercept them, and the rebels got off through the Nepal *Tarai*, eventually making their way into Oudh."

The impact of the insurrections of 1857 was seen in a tightening up of the administration. It was appreciated that there should be more police *thanas* and an expansion of the administrative machinery to stop such insurrections. Roadways were also improved as the Ganges-Darjeeling Road was found to be extremely useful for military movements. Another effect was seen in the great latitude given to the European and Anglo-Indian planters and *zamindars* to continue in an Auxiliary Force which was ultimately transformed into the Bihar Light Horse. Practically all the European and Anglo-Indian planters of the district some of whom were the Forbes, the Shillingfords, the Caves, the Picachys, the Downings, the Johnsons, and the Smiths, etc., had joined the Auxiliary Force which rendered a lot of help to the British administration in the troubled days of 1857. The hands of the loyal *zamindars* were also strengthened by the administration. The peasantry of Purnea was already emasculated and the stregthening of the hands of the European and Anglo-Indian planters and *zamindars*, the loyalist Indian *zamindars* and the encouragement to the creation of some large-landed cultivators were factors which went to emasculate the peasants all the more. In the chapter on "Economic Trends" some of these facts have been discussed.

The next important event for the district of Purnea was a sharp earthquake on the 12th June, 1897 between 4 and 5 P.M. In his no. 726-G, dated Purnea, the 15th June, 1897, J. H. Bernard Esq., Collector of Purnea had sent a report of the earthquake* to the Commissioner of Bhagalpur Division and Santhal Parganas.* From the report of the Collector it appears that the first shock lasted about 3½ minutes and this was followed by one more shock on the night of the 12th June and another on the 13th June. A number of houses in Purnea belonging to the Europeans, the Protestant Church, some Government offices and some residential buildings were damaged. Some bridges on the Ganges-Darjeeling Road were damaged. The railway bridge on the Burhidhor, just south of Debiganj was damaged and communications were interrupted. Fissures had occurred in many places from which water and sand had spouted forth. Some of the Government buildings at Purnea which were damaged were the Circuit House, the Post Office, the Zillah School, the Dak Bungalow and old Telegraph Office, District Jail, City Police-Station, etc. The belfry of the Protestant Church was badly cracked on the four sides and the wall on the north was broken the whole length horizontally at the level of the eve of the main roof. The damage was so serious

*The original of this letter is available in the National Archives, Foreign Department, Intl. B., January 1898, no. 230-31.

that it had to be taken down The Collector's additional Court building although a comparatively new construction was seriously damaged The District Engineer had reported that quite a number of Girder Iron Bridges in the district were damaged and in some cases a few pile piers had shifted out The Subdivisional *Cutchery* of Kishanganj had suffered a lot and the report was "most of the arches, walls in several places top to bottom, and roof in places, are cracked and plaster fallen down The Sub Jail has also suffered in like manner The Ramjan Wooden Bridge near Khagra, has been much damaged Five rows of piles have been moved out of place and out of the perpendicular and incline westward, and the bridge roadway has sunk down The Sub Jail in Araria had been seriously damaged and the building was unsafe The Inspection Bungalow walls were found cracked. The private houses in Araria station had suffered a lot of damage The report was "the three upper storied houses belonging to Messrs. Forbes and Downing and Mrs Shillingford are in ruins, also the one storied houses occupied by Messrs Williams and C J Shillingford and the R C Chapel were all more or less damaged *

Another event of local importance for Purnea but now of very great importance for India had taken place in 1897 From a document in the National Archives of New Delhi, "Foreign Department, External A, May 1897, nos 116 122 K W' it appears that the great problem of the training of Kosi river was taken up at that time The document referred to is a minute of Mr A Izat, Agent and Chief Engineer, Bengal North Western Railway, Mr J A Anderson, Engineer in chief, Eastern Bengal State Railway and Mr W A Inglish, Superintending Engineer, Bengal The subject submitted for consideration was the proposal to close the present channel of the river at Chatra by means of a series of crib groins and to re-open the western channel, known generally as the channel of 1889 Mr Anderson had proposed that in the event of the works he proposed being successfully constructed, there would not be any reasonable probability of the river breaking back into the channel of 1896 between Bubia and Hurinugra He considered, however, that for future years supplementary bunds at other points would be necessary This minute had the support of Inglish and Col Gracey who had visited the area. Col. Gracey advised that the E B Railway should not take any steps for training the Kosi river and that "even if the railway built protective works, they could not guarantee to let moderate floods through, and might consequently decrease the productiveness of the whole tract of country that the training

*The earthquake of 1934 has been described elsewhere (P C R C)

works protected. The railway may in fact render themselves liable for unlimited damages on account of country flooded, washed away, or entirely protected from floods by training works, the result of which it is impossible to foresee, whilst, on the other hand, no credit will be given for the protection afforded to other parts of the country. Col. Gracey thought that "the question was one for the Government of Bengal to deal with, and that if the Government of Bengal decides to carry on any works for training the Kosi the Eastern Bengal Railway would, of course, be willing to aid in every way."

It, however, appears from a telegram no. 328-E.B., dated the 20th February, 1897, from the Foreign Secretary to the Resident in Nepal, Camp *via* Segowlie that "Government of India are considering the necessity of building training works on Kosi river where it issues from hills near Chatra. If these are started immediately the Government of India hope Nepal Darbar will afford assistance as previously agreed as regards bullies, brushwood and grass and will aid Engineers by collecting labour and arranging food supplies within Nepalese territory". It was represented that the interests of Nepal were also largely involved. In no. 28-C-137-3047, dated Camp Segowlie, the 6th March, 1897, Col. H. Wylee, Resident in Nepal informed the Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department that the Minister of Nepal had informed him that the Darbar had no objection to the Kosi training works being undertaken near Chatra on certain conditions. These documents show that the training of the river Kosi which has (1961) now been actively taken up as a joint Indo-Nepal Project was actually mooted in 1897 and the project had the blessings of the Nepal Government even at that time. It is not known why and how the project was not taken up at that time. It is only in the nineteen-fifties that the Kosi Project was undertaken and the Purnea district is vitally affected. There is a large Kosi Project Office located in Purnea town and a Kosi colony has been set up. The Kosi Project has been briefly discussed elsewhere so far as its impact on Purnea is concerned.

EARLY EUROPEAN SETTLERS IN PURNEA.

Any history of Purnea district should have some reference to the early European settlers. From the old records it would appear that there were European settlers in Purnea almost immediately after the establishment of British rule in the district. Purnea was made the headquarters of the district after the advent of the British rule and by 1771 quite a number of Europeans had settled in the area known as Rambagh. This area, however, became

unhealthy as it was hemmed in by the marshy channels of the Saura River.

There was a shift of the Government offices more towards the west of the town by 1835 and gradually the official residents in the civil lines migrated to the present site of Purnea town. The European indigo planters also started settling in that portion of the Purnea town leaving Rambagh or near about the district headquarters. The only building left in Rambagh, was the Church and the priests' house. The Roman Catholic Church was dismantled and re-erected in the new station of Purnea where the Europeans had already set up their residences. The foundation of this new Church was laid in 1849 and the Church was there till 1934 when it was badly affected by the Bihar Earthquake The Church was dismantled again and the present Church was erected nearby within a couple of years of the Earthquake

The nuns of Loreto Convent of Darjeeling had come to Purnea near about 1882 and had opened a day school as well as a boarding school for the children in Purnea district. When the Jesuit Mission of Bengal took over the Purnea Mission from the Capuchin Mission, the school was closed, and the nuns returned to Darjeeling. This house still stands and is known as "Coumblin". "Coumblin" is one of the oldest houses in Purnea town. It is now occupied by the Allisons

Quite a number of European families had settled down in Purnea town and round about. Even till 1933 there were quite a large number of European families lingering on in Purnea town and round about. There were the Shillingfords, Johnsons, Picachis, Cawes, Hayes, Downings, Tom Smith, Byers, etc in Purnea town. Many of them were gentlemen-farmers, the indigo concerns having been abolished years before and some were in the employment of Banaili and Nazarganj Raj. Earlier some of them had made great contribution to the agricultural prosperity of the district by showing better technique in agriculture and farming methods. Usually each o them would have a consolidated block of land with a bungalow in it, their *kothis* would be run more by the subordinates known as *Amlas*. Many of them were interested in dogs and horses and were keen sportsmen Mr Tom Smith of Kolassy was a marvellous horseman and could tame any wild horse. His father Charles Smith was known as Prince Charlie and was one of the biggest race horse owners of his days. He also had extensive property at Hinoo in Ranchi. It is said that when Prince Charlie would go out for a walk he would be followed by about 50 of his pet highly bred dogs. Tom Smith

and Mrs. Smith were of great help in organising socials when the Houston expedition came to Purnea in 1933 and for the first time flew over Nepal in planes.*

Another well-known family the remnants of which are still continuing to Purnea is that of the Shillingfords. The three original Shillingfords were Joseph, George and Fred and they were all great sportsmen. Joseph died in 1889, Fred in 1907 at Brighton.

Two brothers George Palmer and Charles Palmer came to Purnea near about 1811. They were related to the John Palmers of Calcutta. George Palmer died in 1840. Charles Palmer had married Begum Reazoon Nissa, a Mohammadan lady who had been converted into Christianity. She was also the 8 annas proprietor of *Pergana* Siripore with Babu Pratap Singh. Reazoon Nissa died in 1870 and Charles Palmer in 1873. They had one daughter Marian, who married William Pringle Downing. Marian Palmer Downing pre-deceased her father Charles Palmer. Charles Palmer left his property, which was left to him by his wife, Reazoon Nissa, to his grand children and children of Marian Palmer Downing. Marian Palmer Downing had married G. S. Hayes. The original Palmer estate was divided between the Downings and the Hayes in 1874 and came to be known as the Downing Estate and Hayes Estate. Mr. Marian Hayes died in 1911 and G. S. Hayes in 1924.

Another family the Caoes were related to the Shillingfords by marriage. Henry Caoe who died in Purnea in 1886 was the proprietor of Gondwarrah indigo concern which was ultimately owned by the Maharaja of Darbhanga. The ancestors of the Johnson family were J. C. Johnson and E.W. Johnson who owned at one time three indigo concerns in the district.

There was a Crow family who were related to the Downings by marriage. The last of the Crow family in Purnea was F. Y. Crow, who died at Sursee in November, 1948.

The Forbes owned the Sultanpore Estate in Forbesganj which is named after the family, were big landlords and indigo planters. A. H. Forbes was a barrister but does not appear to have practised. He was the last of the family out in India. He died in Darjeeling but was brought and buried in Purnea in

*If anyone is interested he could find a lot of materials in the books on Houston Expedition written by Wing Commander Fellows and others (P.C.R.C.).

1932*. There were numerous other families of European settlers who settled in Purnea both as indigo planters and private gentlemen or officials.

The Indigo planters had their Doctor David Picachy, a good old Medico who was almost always on his trap and horse. Dr. Picachy was also looking after all the employees of the planters. In the early days of the European planters there were a few Mission Hospitals one of which was at Kanki which has now gone to West Dinajpur. The Majlispore Mission at Kanki ran their own schools and hospitals.

It may be mentioned that Korah is still known as "Gena-Bari" because a rhinoceros was shot there. This has been referred to before. Another report is that Mr. A. G. M. Wodschow, Manager of the Korah Indigo Concern had shot a rhinoceros. It may also be possible that two animals had been shot.

The Indigo planters did a lot in improving the town of Purnea. A big race course was established in the area in front of the present Girls' School and behind the residence of Mr. William. The regular race meets were so popular that race horses and jockeys would come from Calcutta to take part in these race meets. The planters had their own house boats. Before the railways were established indigo used to be sent down to Calcutta by river.

Reference has already been made to the *shikar* that the planters used to indulge. It is on record that Allan Johnson and W. R.P. Downing who is still a resident of Purnea once shot a man-eating alligator which measured 26'-9" from tip to tip and 9'-9" round the girth. When the much distended belly was ripped open an undigested body of a boy was found. The entire remains of the boy in two portions were recovered and from a copper ring on his big toe was identified to be an Etwari of the village who had been missing since a few days back. Mr. Downing informs that in many of the alligators they had found stones in the larger of the species. He has also experimented on riding a buffalo through alligator infested streams to experiment the truth of the unwritten law between alligators and water buffaloes, that one should not attack or molest the other.

Earthquake of 1934.

The great Bihar Earthquake of January 15, 1934, was another landmark in the history of the district. Although the epicentre of this earthquake was located far away the damages done to the

*The above notes were made by one from a book published in 1920 by the Rev. Father H. Hostin S.J. The title of the book is "Inscriptions on Christian Graves and Memorial Tablets"

roads, buildings, railway tracks, bridges and culverts were not inconsiderable. It is true that Purnea district escaped lightly in comparison to the other Bihar districts like Muzaffarpur and Champaran and this was probably due to the sandy composition of the soil. Nevertheless, a large number of private and public buildings were damaged in all the urban areas. Gratuitous relief, house building, sand clearance and agricultural loans had to be distributed. The widely spread cracks and fissures on the roads and culverts had thrown the communications out of gear for a considerable time. The administrative authorities, however, tackled the situation quickly and tactfully. Officers were deputed to assess the damages. As the houses in the villages were mostly light structures of jute-reeds and thatch, the damage to them was not so severe. Agricultural economy was considerably upset as a large volume of sand and sulphuric clods had been thrown out and had to be cleared. One interesting feature of the Earthquake of 1934 was that the wells both in the rural and urban areas were choked and had to be cleared. The incidence of health in Purnea district is said to have definitely improved after the Earthquake of 1934 and the older generation people assert that the water of Purnea district and the potability of water had definitely improved.

KISAN SABHA MOVEMENT.

Kisan Sabha Movement which had been responsible for an acute agitation in Purnea district in the third decade in this century and figured prominently for about 20 years has its roots in the very agricultural economy and the previous structure of permanent landlordism in this State. From time to time local leaders have tried to agitate for a better deal for the *raiyats* (*kisans*). The inherent defects in a permanent settlement arrangement became all the more acute in Purnea district because of a large number of absentee landlords and because a number of the *zamindars* left the administration of the *zamindari* absolutely in the hands of their *Amlas* (employees). Any reference to the old revenue records of Purnea prior to the abolition of *zamindari* will show that a large number of the big landlords in Purnea district came from undivided Bengal and other provinces and most of them paid very rare visits to their *zamindari*. Rich families of Murshidabad, Dacca, Calcutta and other places owned large slices of *zamindari* in this district. Mathurapur Zamindari Company, some of the Tagore families and a few European planters who had gone away abroad had *zamindari* interests in portions of the district. They were usually represented by their *Amlas* and it is a well-known fact

that *Amla* rule was extremely unsympathetic. Many of the villages of Purnea district had literally been depopulated because of the oppression of the landlords. The European indigo concerns were converted into *zamindaries* which were also more or less left to the *Amlas*. Some of the European *zamindars* did very little for their *raiyats* and spent their time mostly in sports in India or abroad. These are some of the factors which made Purnea district a good field for *Kisan* agitation.

The *Kisan Sabha* was formed at Monghyr near about 1922-23 and the agitation that was sponsored had its effect on Purnea district as well. The Movement received a great impetus in the hands of Swami Sahajananda Saraswati of Bihta (Patna) who had great mob oratory and toured throughout the State addressing the *kisans* (peasants) and condemning both bureaucracy and the *zamindars*. His yellow robes had an extra attraction to the people. Quite a few *kisan* leaders were prominent throughout Bihar in the thirties and one of them was Swami Bhawani Dayal who had returned to India after a long spell in South Africa. After a formal inauguration of *Kisan Sabha* at Bihta in Patna district in 1928 Swami Sahajananda Saraswati started organizing *Kisan Sabha* branches in the various districts and for some time the *Kisan* Movement was running as an ancillary to the Congress Movement, but occasionally at cross purposes. After the death of Swami Sahajananda Saraswati and because of the Congress impact that had already taken up land reforms the movement as a separate factor had declined and it practically merged into the Congress Movement. But even before the *Kisan Sabha* had been organised, there were *kisan* troubles in Purnea.

A study of the annual Land Revenue Administration Reports of Purnea district will show that year after year it was reported that the relations between the landlords and tenants were strained. The Land Revenue Administration Report of 1916-17 had particularly mentioned that absentee *zamindars* in Kishanganj subdivision had developed a continued tendency to dispossess tenants with a view to obtain enhanced rent or realise various customary *abwabs*. Certain types of criminal offences were extremely common in Purnea district even as late as 1930—40. It was a routine matter for the landlord or the *Amlas* to send for the recalcitrant tenant and to keep him tied up in front of the *kutchery* as a public exhibit to terrorise other tenants. The tenants used to be forcibly put into various torturesome physical punishment and extraction of thumb impression of the

poor tenants on blank paper was a common *zulum* in Purnea. It is again in Purnea district that one finds very large cultivators owning thousands of acres of cultivation lands. The type of acquisition of huge chunks of cultivation lands in the face of the then laws would normally be possible only if *zamindars* or the large cultivators had a great influence often sinister on the *raiyats*. They had almost followed the example of the European indigo planters in the late 19th century who used to take the help of the administration for getting large consolidated blocks of land for their farms. Peculiarly enough in spite of a vast surplus population that could be syphoned off for agricultural labour there is a dearth of labour leading to importation of seasonal labourers and a consequent unemployment in the villages This factor was fully utilised by the landlords, planters, *amlas* who had a regular hierarchy of *tahlus, khansamas, saises, kamias, dais, kaharins,* etc., who were all practically bonded labour

It is not that troubles between the landlords and the tenants always merely brewed. Occasionally there were violent eruptions. The peasants of Dharampur *Pargana* raised the banner of revolt in 1922-23 against the Darbhanga Raj on the allegation of exploitations. The fact that the *raiyats* could openly agitate against such a powerful and rich *zamindar* shows that the tenants were quite exasperated. The Non-Co-operation Movement and the *Kisan Sabha* agitation had affected the *raiyats* in Dharampur *Pargana*. The annual Land Revenue Administration Reports are quite specific about this agitation. The gravity of the situation in Dharampur *Pargana* against the Darbhanga Raj was realised and a reference to the Board was made on this matter to Government as will be found in the Land Revenue Administration Report for 1922-23. In 1924-25 there were acute disputes between Mathurapur Zamindari Company, an absentee landlord and the *raiyats* in *thana* Manihari over the settlement of lands known as *Mankut* which originally produced indigo. In the Kishanganj subdivision the relations between the landlords and tenants had become extremely strained. The *Patni* tenure which was prevalent in Purnea alone of all the districts in the State was another fact for oppressing the *raiyats*. The *Patnidar* had his right for a definite period only and naturally he tried to squeeze out whatever he could from the tenants during his *Patni*. From the Land Revenue Administration Report of 1927-28 it appears that the Collector of Purnea had reiterated his complaint about the indifference of Darbhanga Raj towards his tenants. By 1927-28

the *Kisan* agitation had affected all the three subdivisions of Purnea district.

The great economic depression which became evident from 1929-30 had hit hard the peasantry. The precipitate fall in prices of the agricultural commodities badly affected the economic condition of the peasants. During the period under review the *Kisan Sabha* agitated for reduction or suspension of rent and thus tension between the landlords and tenants became all the more acute. The observation of the Commissioner of Bhagalpur on the situation in Land Revenue Administration Report, 1931-32 may be quoted. He observes :

> "There have been two factors during the year which were liable to cause tension between the landlords and the tenants, the renewal of the Civil Disobedience, and the economic depression. The movement against the landlords has not been an avowed part of the Civil Disobedience programme in the division where many of the Congress supporters are petty land owners and its effect has been more felt in the general disturbance of confidence and spirit of defiance which it produces."

In the decade 1931—40 the *Kisan Sabha* Movement became very active throughout Bihar. An Enquiry Committee was set up by the Provincial *Kisan Sabha* in 1933 and the Committee visited many villages in Gaya district and recorded their observations about the tenants in *A History of the Pitiable Plight of the Kisans*. The Government of Bihar were watching the situation with utmost precaution and asked their District Officers to supply "more detailed information with regard to the operations of the *Kisan Sabha*." "The relations of this body", they wrote to the latter on the 24th November, 1933, "with similar bodies in the United Provinces with the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru of that province are at present one of the politically important considerations." The second Provincial Kisan Conference met at Gaya on the 29th and 30th August, 1934 with Shri Purushottam Das Tandon as President. Besides the leaders of Bihar the meeting was attended by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his brother. Speeches were made against the tyranny of the *zamindars* and exhorted the tenants to fight for improvement of their own lot and for independence. The Gaya Conference deliberations were reported in all the papers

including the non-payment of taxes, the Salt *Satyagraha*, opening of National Schools, organisation of volunteer force, sponsoring of *khadi* centres and Congress *Ashrams* throughout the district, boycott of foreign goods, Quit India Movement, 1942 repercussions, etc., were fully implemented by the people of Purnea, a large number of whom courted arrests and imprisonment in different years. At the very inception of the movement in Purnea a Writer Head Constable, father of Shri Ram Binode Singh, M.L.A. was found to be fomenting hostility among constables and chowkidars in Palasi police-station the place where he was posted.*

Mahatma Gandhi visited Purnea in 1925 and had addressed crowded meetings at various places including Kishanganj, Bishunpur, Araria and Purnea, etc. At Bishunpur in Dhamdaha P.-S. there was a large gathering and the people had presented a substantial purse for the Deshabandhu Memorial Fund. Mahatma Gandhi's second tour from the 11th January, 1927 was in connection with the collection of money for *charkha* and *khadi*. During this tour he came in touch with the National School which was opened as one of the programmes of Non-Co-operation Movement. At Dharampur in 1925 a Middle School was opened in honour of Mahatma Gandhi's visit to that place. This visit of Mahatma Gandhi along with other leaders of Bihar had a tremendous impact. The active centres were Gokul *Ashram* at Purnea and Tikapatti *Ashram* at Tikapatti along with other places. At the instance of Dr. Rajendra Prasad there was an intensive demonstration in Patna against the Simon Commission in December, 1928 and the crowd at Patna that had shouted a full-throated disapproval of Simon Commission had a good sprinkling of people of Purnea. On the constructive side the gospel of *charkha* and *khadi*, village development, etc., had been taken up through various Congress *Ashrams*. Rupauli, Dhamdaha, Purnea, Banmankhi in Sadar subdivision were some of the very active Congress centres. There were several such in Kishanganj and Araria subdivisions. The enthusiasm of the people to implement the dictates of the Congress could be estimated from the fact that arrests for breaking the Salt Law in Purnea district in the course of six months and Salt *Satyagraha* came to 716 in number. Thousands of rupees had been realised in fines. Repressive measures on the part of the Administration could not curb this spirit of ending the British regime. At one time some police went with a

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warrant against a man of Tikapatti who was not found. The police entered the house of one Garib Lall and after removing everything put their own locks on the house. The old mother of Garib Lall was quickly given shelter in another house. The highhandedness of the police brought the men of Tikapatti closer. Heavy fines, confiscation of property, physical torture, rigorous imprisonment, etc., could not damp the fervour to implement the Congress policy.

THE 1942 MOVEMENT.

The Civil Disobedience Movement and the *Kisan* agitation had brought in a spirit of restlessness among the people and an antipathy to the bureaucratic British Administration. It had also brought about a sort of solidarity between different castes and creeds. When in August, 1942, there was a mass arrest of the leaders throughout India including Gandhiji and an outbreak of a violent lawlessness against the constituted authority, Purnea district was also the scene of intense activities in which the different sections of the people had participated. The student community and the Congress workers throughout the district, mill and factory hands of Katihar and Kishanganj took the lead in the upsurge. The arrest of the Provincial leaders at Patna on the 9th, 10th and 11th August, 1942, along with the arrests of the leaders of all-India fame at different places in India ignited the spark and all at once the whole of the district was in the throes of intense excitement which broke out into concrete measures against the Administration, such as, damaging the public communications, Government buildings and properties and hoisting of Congress flag on public buildings. Quickly the whole district was up in a revolt and this was almost unpremeditated and without any definite central leadership. The movement quickly went underground and some of the younger generations from their underground coverage used to give directions to particular pockets.

The police and the magistracy were also quick to retaliate and were added by the military. A Congress *Ashram* at Tikapatti was seized and sealed on the 10th August, 1942. Processions and assemblies were banned. The police were alerted throughout the district and were strengthened quickly by armed forces and the military were called in. Almost simultaneously there were large processions, *hartals* and demonstrations at various places in the district from the 11th August, 1942. The Congress flag was forcibly hoisted on the court building at Kishanganj. The railway and telegraph lines between Sarsi and Banmankhi

railway stations were uprooted and there was a general strike at the jute mills in Katihar. On the 13th August railway lines between Katihar and Barsoi and at the Kosi bridge near Kursela were damaged. The damaging of railway lines and telegraph communications had been deliberately done to stop infiltration of the police and military forces.

On the 13th August there was a violent procession of about 10,000 persons at Katihar through the public roads. The office of the Sub-Registrar was attacked, Government properties looted and the Congress flag was hoisted both on the Sub-Registrar's office and on the court building of Munsif. Several local leaders were arrested by the police which infuriated the mob all the more and there was a violent attack on the *thana.* The police resorted to firing to disperse the mob and a young boy Dhruba Kumar Kundu, son of Dr. Kishori Lal Kundu, a prominent Congress man of Katihar received bullet injury and ultimately died in the hospital. Several other persons were also injured and a few killed. A huge procession carried the dead body of Dhruba Kumar Kundu to the cremation ground on the river Kosi. The crowd was addressed by Kishori Lal Kundu, Shri Jibatsa Sharma "Himanshu" and others. Shri Jibatsa Sharma was arrested the same day followed by the arrest of Kishori Lal Kundu on the next day.

The news of the death of Dhruba Kumar quickly led to the formation of a Dhruba *Dal,* a contingent to oppose the British Administration in the district. The news of outbreak of disturbances in the neighbouring districts and other places in India spread through newspapers although there was an attempt to stop infiltration of newspapers within the district. The pattern of concrete action was almost the same throughout the country.

Unfortunately, for sometime there was an open excitement to destroy Government properties and public communications. Several local leaders were arrested while they were returning after destroying the railway line to Malda. Cases of arson broke out at various places with the aim of destroying Government properties only. Besides at Katihar, there was a firing at Dharara on the 13th August where four persons were killed on the spot and eight were injured. There was a firing at Araria also where eleven persons were injured. Violent attack by the police with *lathis* was commonly resorted to throughout the district and there was a mass scale of arrests under different

sections of the Penal Code and under the Defence of India Rules.

The repressive measures did not seem to have the required effect immediately. On the 16th August a large mob raided the Rupauli and Tikapatti Post Offices and a number of breaches were made on the Purnea-Banmankhi and Purnea-Jogbani sections of the railways. Quite a number of police *thanas* were raided, furniture burnt down and Congress flag hoisted. By this time the police had realised that it was no use infuriating the mob all the more by the resort of opening of fire and firing became less common.

On the 18th August, 1942, there was a memorable meeting of the national workers of Purnea at the Sarsi Middle School under the presidentship of Shri Baidyanath Prasad Choudhury. Shri Baidyanath Prasad Choudhury gave the required lead that there should not be any sudden attack on Government properties and institutions but they should be done after giving due notice beforehand. It was also resolved that all the *thanas* of the district should be raided and the flag hoisted but the *thana* property should be kept in a well-protected place. The meeting also decided to occupy the buildings of the Purnea Collectorate on the 27th August and to hoist the flag on the court buildings. It was further decided that there should be a succession of leaders in case of arrests. Shri Lakshmi Narayan Singh "Sudhansu" was nominated to be the first leader to be followed by Shri Baidyanath Prasad Choudhury, and then Shri Basudeo Prasad Singh.

It appears that there was complete lawlessness in certain pockets, namely, Katihar, Rupauli, Barari, Tikapatti and Karagola areas. The District Magistrate moved for the deputation of a military party to deal with the grave emergency on the 20th August. A military force had already been posted at Katihar but the District Magistrate's report on the 20th August shows that the deployment of military at Katihar did not have much effect.

Orders were issued by the District Magistrate to all the police *thanas* that the *thana* buildings should be fenced and the police force kept intact inside and there should be no hesitation to shoot anybody entering the compound after giving a warning if that step was felt to be necessary. It further appears that some of the Military Officers in charge of the troops in Purnea were quite eager to prepare "the ground for declaring martial

law in the area, if necessary".* The District Magistrate, however, differed from the military view and considered that the situation could be controlled if there was a sufficiently strong force at Purnea which could be distributed to the subdivisions if necessary. Small military sections were deployed in route marches and in visiting those villages which were considered to be troublesome pockets. But even the presence of the military did not curb the feelings. On the 25th August, 1942, the Dhruba Day was celebrated throughout the district to commemorate the young boy Dhruba who had died of police firing at Katihar. There were sporadic attacks on the police *thanas* at different places and firing had to be resorted to. There was a violent attack on Rupauli police *thana* by a huge mob and portions of the *thana* buildings were burnt down. The police had to open fire and according to Government report twenty-five persons were killed on the 25th August in Rupauli. Grave excesses were committed and the Junior Sub-Inspector of Police and three constables were overpowered and thrown into fire. Similar scenes were reported from Dhamdaha. The Dhruba *Dal* organised a large gathering in the local High School which was addressed by a few persons. The police-station was raided and the flag was hoisted on the *thana* building. The Baluchi military section opened fire which killed quite a few persons, some of whom fell dead in the *thana* compound and some in the fields nearby. Several Union Board Offices and Post Offices were also raided on the 26th August 1942. On the 27th August some political prisoners broke open two cells in the Purnea Jail and some prisoners were set free. A batch of the people proceeding by the Karagola Road was set upon by the police and the military and some of them were beaten severely and a few were taken prisoners. On the afternoon of the same day 27th August, 1942, a large crowd of many Santhals carrying bows and arrows moved towards the treasury at Purnea. The military opened fire and dispersed the crowd. All this naturally led to excesses by the police. The dwelling houses of some respectable persons were raided by the police and military with a certain amount of vengeance obviously to strike terror in the minds of the people. A very large number of men had been assaulted throughout the district but not arrested. There were also widespread arrests of a large number of persons throughout the district and many detained under the Defence of India Rules. A number of important cases of arson, loot and murder ended in charge-sheets against a number of respectable persons.

**Freedom Movement in Bihar*, Vol. III, by Dr. K. K. Dutta, p. 125.

Two of such cases may be mentioned. One of the cases was from Banmankhi in which Shri Anup Lal Mahta and others were prosecuted and sentenced to various types of sentences. The sentences were set aside by the Patna High Court. Shri Anup Lal Mahta became the Chairman of the Purnea District Board. The Dhamdaha *thana* raid case ended in conviction for a large number of men some of whom were quite young who were arrested, prosecuted or persecuted in the course of August disturbances, mention may be made of a few who have taken a larger hand in politics in later years.* They are—

Shri Lakshmi Narayan Sudhansu, Shri Baidyanath Chaudhury, Shri Daroga Prasad Chaudhury, Shri Anath Kanta Basu, Shri Satinath Bhaduri, Shri Jibach Sharma "Himangshu", Shri Satyendra Nath Roy, Dr. Kishori Lal Kundu, Shri Kamaldeo Narayan Sinha, Shri Bhola Shastri, Shri Phani Gopal Sen, Shri Kasturi Mandal, Shri Bokai Mandal, Shri Ram Narain Mandal, etc.

LATER EVENTS.

With the subsidence of the August 1942 Movement there was a tightening of the administration throughout the country and Purnea was also no exception. The years that followed were marked by a certain amount of scarcity and a short supply of essential commodities which strengthened in a way the hands of the administration to firmly rule the people. This phase has been described separately. In this context mention may, however, be made that strangely enough the solidarity among the different sections of the district that had been brought about by the Congress Movement was liquidated to a certain extent by a certain amount of communalism. There were also pockets in Purnea district which had a majority of Muslim population. Pockets in Kishanganj subdivision had to be watched on occasions like *Bakrid* and from time to time there used to be communal tension which usually commenced from the town of Kishanganj. To give an example, even as late as 1934 there was a serious trouble over a Tajia during Muharram in the town of Kishanganj. Persons interested in the spread of communalism had always tried their hands in Purnea district. The activities of the Muslim League were particularly concentrated in Kishanganj subdivision and in the other Muslim pockets of the other subdivisions. The later phase in the bid for freedom

**Freedom Movement*, Vol. III by Dr. K. K. Dutta, pp. 137-139 gives a lengthy list of such persons.

was unfortunately marked by communal tension and communal riots in 1946. Purnea district was badly affected and there was a certain amount of exodus of the Muslims from this district. The authorities had put down communalism with a firm hand but not before sufficient mischief was done. In May, 1947 a largely attended conference of the Bihar Provincial Muslim League was held in Kishanganj with the Hon'ble Raja Ghaznafar Ali in the chair. This conference was held particularly in connection with the communal riots of 1946. In the conference the Bihar Government was bitterly criticised for some of the measures taken to quell the riots. This conference also passed the resolution demanding the inclusion of Purnea, North Bhagalpur, North Monghyr and the Santhal Parganas in the Province of Bengal and in their exuberance went to caution the Muslims of Bihar against Jamait-ul-ulema, the Ahrars and the Khaksars. These bodies along with Abdul Qaiyum Ansari, a staunch Congressman of Bihar were called traitors to the country.* After independence of the country in 1947 a very important event for the district was the visit of the States Re-organisation Commission in 1955. The visit of the Commission led to an outburst of local feelings and a certain amount of avoidable bitterness between Bihar and West Bengal which laid claim to portions of Purnea district. It has been mentioned elsewhere that owing to the implementation of the recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission, a considerable portion of the Kishanganj subdivision was transferred to West Bengal in 1956.

SURVEY AND SETTLEMENT OPERATIONS.

The Survey and Settlement Operations in Purnea district commenced in 1952. As the Survey and Settlement Operations in Purnea district came after the Chotanagpur Settlement in the thirties, it was difficult to find a proper subordinate staff as most of the subordinate staff that had worked in the earlier settlement were not available. It was difficult to get proper *Amins*, *Munsarims* and *Quanangos* and it was a herculian task that the Government was faced with. It is usual for the Survey and Settlement Operations to create a stir and to bring into relief many of the dormant land disputes. The operations in Purnea were not free from such troubles. The Settlement Operations were concluded in 1960.

It may be said that almost throughout the operations there was an acute agrarian situation in the tract where the operations

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**Freedom Movement in Bihar* by Dr. K. K. Dutta, Vol. III, p. 360.

took place. It has been mentioned before that there were a large number of *bataidars* in this district and it was not that their *batai* lands were always shown in the *parchas* (leases). The landlords were reluctant to have the names of the *bataidars* recorded to be in possession of all the *bataidars*. The *bataidars* were naturally restive and wanted to have their names recorded. Almost as a rule the landlords started preventing the *bataidars* attempting to transplant paddy in such lands. Such disputes were quite common particularly in Santhal villages. There was a good deal of tension in Dhamdaha *thana* and an employee of a landlord of Bishanpur was murdered. The *bataidars* were advised by the Government that they could seek relief in Attestation camps if they were dissatisfied with the entries at Khanapuri stage. The Settlement Officer and the District Magistrate were asked to tackle these Santhal villages carefully.

The murder of the *sepahi* of an influential landlord at village Chandrahi near Dhamdaha was due to the dispute between the Santhal *bataidars* and the landlord over the possession of block of lands which did not find entries of the names of the *bataidars* in the *parchas*. There were quite a number of cases of the looting of crops. The situation had to be met with a good deal of tact and sympathy.

The position of the *bataidars* was rather unenviable. Their real difficulty was that they depended virtually on the landlords not only for lands but also for many other assets like rural credit, etc. The *bataidars* were not in a position to fight against the landlords due to the poor economic condition. In the majority of cases the land owners tried to harass and oppress the *bataidars* because the latter were too weak and unorganised to put forward any false claim against the big owners. Under such circumstances if the *Amins* and the Inspectors were openly siding with landlords the trouble of the *bataidars* could not get redressed. The Settlement Officer had to summarily discharge a considerable number of *Amins* who were found to indulge in mal-practices.

The mal-practices and corruption existing among the *Amins* and other subordinate staff had early attracted the attention of the settlement authorities. There was a spate of complaints of this type which were invariably enquired into and detections were met with severe punishment.

Administrative Changes.

A high power States Reorganisation Commission was set up by the Central Government for re-adjusting the areas of

States if considered necessary. The States Reorganisation Commission had visited the district of Purnea in 1956 and had given the recommendations, for adding a portion of the district to West Bengal. The State of Bihar had strongly opposed the move and there were local agitations both for and against the move. However, when the recommendations were accepted by the Central Government, there was re-adjustment as a result of which a portion of Purnea district has now gone over to West Bengal. This matter has been covered elsewhere. It may, however, be mentioned here that the present sub-division of Kishanganj in Purnea district has been materially affected by the re-adjustment of the States, which also materially affects the Purnea district. Islampur and Chopra *thanas* along with some other *thanas* have gone over to West Bengal and some of these *thanas* were quite litigious areas. As a result, the Bar at Kishanganj has been financially affected. Owing to the creation of the subdivision of Islampur with headquarters at Islampur which could only be approached through Kishanganj town, custom barriers have been raised which affect the trade and commerce of Purnea district. At present there is no proper hospital at Islampur where *post mortem* examination can take place and *post mortem* cases of Islampur headquarters are invariably sent to Kishanganj.

LAND REFORMS.

Administrative history of Purnea has completely changed after the introduction of the land reforms in recent years. Although the problem of land reforms has been covered elsewhere, the broad features of the present land reforms may also be indicated here. Briefly stated they are: (*i*) abolition of the *zamindari* system, (*ii*) the elimination of intermediaries, (*iii*) simplification of tenures and conversion of tenancy status into ownership, (*iv*) fixation of ceiling on holdings of land, (*v*) re-distribution of land with a view to find land for the landless, (*vi*) restriction on sub-letting and share cropping, (*vii*) provisions for co-operative farming, (*viii*) limitation on sub-division and fragmentation of holdings through fixation of floor on one side and the consolidation of holdings on the other. The main objective was to bring out a socialistic pattern of society and therefore, the landed community either the *zamindars* or the large scale cultivators had to be touched. The land reforms are quite revolutionary in character and have naturally brought in an unprecedented upsurge in the common man and at the present moment the social adjustments are in a fluid condition.

The next landmark of importance in the history of the district of Purnea as well as the State is the implementation of the two Five-Year Plans. The Five-Year Plans are intimately connected with the aims and objectives of land reforms. Special insistence has been given on co-operative farming and during the First Five-Year Plan the State Governments were expected to make experiments in methods and techniques of co-operative farming and to draw up phased programmes for the adoption of co-operative farming as a vital policy. Unfortunately very little action was taken in this direction. The Second Five-Year Plan has emphasised that co-operative farming should be developed as quickly as possible. It is expected that during the Third Five-Year Plan there will be a special underlining of the programme for co-operative farming. At the moment history is being made in the district of Purnea on the anvil of land reforms covering as indicated before land re-distribution, ceiling on existing holdings, consolidation of holdings and co-operative farming. It has been mentioned elsewhere that in Purnea district there are quite a few cultivators with thousands of acres of cultivable land—an unique feature in Bihar. The response of the people to the different items of land reforms has been different and much depends on the attitude of the common man towards them. The opposition potential should also not be ignored. It is not necessary here to enter into the question how far the land reforms that have been completed so far have brought change in land distribution or in the structure of farming. The experiment is far too young and it cannot be expected that the extreme poverty, land hunger, social and personal injustices would be so quickly liquidated. What, however, has to be impressed is that the present history is the economic picture of the district. The district had adjusted extremely well when the British administration had ended in 1947 and the democracy was ushered in. But the period of strain has not yet been over and the far-reaching planning has been and is being attempted.

CHAPTER III.

PEOPLE.

GROWTH OF POPULATION.

References regarding population of Purnea district prior to 1872 Census are found in Reports of Dr. Buchanan Hamilton (1811), Hamilton's *East Indian Gazetteers* (1820) and that of an experimental Census of 1869. Hamilton's *East Indian Gazetteers* had mentioned that the population in 1801 was 1,450,000. The basis does not appear to be very accurate. The following extract from page 687 from the *East Indian Gazetteers* is relevant :—

> "About 1790, the result of an official inquiry in the Purnea district found 80,914 husbandmen holding leases, and 22,324 artificers paying ground rent, in 2,784 villages and upon 2,531 square miles. Allowing five to a family, this gives more than 203 to a square mile. In 1801, the result of the replies of the Collectors in Bengal to the question circulated by the Board of Revenue, proved that the Purnea district contained 1,450,000 inhabitants, in the proportion of seven Mohammadans to 10 Hindoos."

W. W. Hunter had given the earliest estimate of population of the district of Purnea as follows :—

> "The earliest estimate of the population of the district of Purnea that I have met with in the records was made by the Collector in 1789, and does not pretend to much statistical accuracy, being based 'on the average of an actual investigation of three small villages, multiplied by 5,800, the number of villages in the district'. The results obtained were : Men, 307,400; women, 327,700; boys, 224,400; girls, 176,900 : total, 1,061,400; to which were added for Purniah and other large towns, 138,600, making the total of inhabitants 1,200,000. It is remarked that 'the great

difference in the number of boys and girls must arise from the latter being considered as adults at the age of eleven or twelve, and the former not till they reach their twentieth year' and that 'general opinion swells the grand total to 1,500,000 inhabitants'."*

Buchanan Hamilton's estimate of the population in 1810-11 had been referred to in the following quotation from W. W. Hunter's *A Statistical Account of Bengal* [Vol. XV (1877): p. [240-41] :— "Dr. Buchanan Hamilton, *Circ.* 1811, calculated that the population of the whole district, as then constituted, was 2,904,380 souls—an excessive estimate, even after making all allowances for the greater extent of the Purniah Jurisdiction at that time. Subtracting the population of the Dimiya police circle, which has been transferred to Bhagalpur, and of Kharwa Nehnagar, Bholahat, Sibganj, Kaliachak, and Gargariba, now comprised in Maldah district, to which he assigned a total population of 695,880, the remaining population of 2,208,500 is much greater than that ascertained by the Census of 1872."**

Hunter had also referred to the population figure in the experimental Census of Purnea district which was carried on along with the other districts of the Lower Provinces in 1868-69. That figure was 951,874 souls but Hunter observed: "It does not appear on what grounds these figures were adopted".

The figures have to be taken with the area of the district at the time of computation. As pointed out by Hunter the area in Buchanan Hamilton's time was much larger than the present area of the district. Hamilton's *East Indian Gazetteers* mention that "Purnea comprises 5,119 square miles, of a fertile, compact, well watered flat". In this connection it has to be mentioned that Purnea district appears to have been continuing with the same area from 1872 to 1956. Owing to the implementation of the recommendation of the States Reorganisation Commission the district lost an area of 759 square miles with a population of 277,288 souls. This portion went over to West Bengal.

The first regular Census based on more acceptable criteria was taken in 1872. This Census recorded the area of the

**A Statistical Accounts of Bengal*, Vol. XV (1877), p. 240.

***A Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol. XV. (1877), pp. 240-241.

district as 4,957 square miles and a population of 1,714,795 souls. This exposed the overestimation of Buchanan Hamilton and the underestimation of the experimental Census of 1869. Between 1850—75 the river Kosi was moving away, from this district towards the west. As an extensive area was available for reclamation and development, there was a large influx of immigrants from other districts. The population increased to 1,849,073 in the Census of 1881 or it rose by 7.8 per cent. There was a steady growth of population in the next decade and the Census of 1891 recorded the population at 19,44,658 or the increase was 5.1 per cent between 1881 and 1891. The growth was most in the *thanas* of Damdaha and Forbesganj (formerly Matihari), which attracted an influx of settlers from Bhagalpur, Monghyr and Darbhanga. These *thanas* had large stretches for pastoral purposes. As in most other districts of Bihar, there was a set-back in the 1891—1900 period and the 1901 Census revealed a fall of 3.6 per cent as the population decreased to 1,874,794. There were severe outbreaks of cholera in 1891 and 1900, the number of deaths from cholera in the latter year being no less than 46,240 or 24 per mile. The incidence of public health was bad throughout, and in seven years out of ten, deaths outnumbered births by 38,239. There was also a large fall in the number of immigrants because of the epidemic of cholera (*Census of India*, Vol. V—Report, p. 30).

The results of the 1901 Census were summarised as follows in the *Bengal Census Report* and quoted in the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911) :—

> "The only *thana* in the whole district that shows an increase is Saifganj*, which owes its development to the fact that it contains the important railway junction at Katihar. Thanks to this *thana*, the tract west of the Mahananda has slightly gained in population since 1891, while that to the east of that river is responsible for the whole of the loss which has taken place. The decline is least marked in Purnea itself and in the *thanas* bordering on the Kosi, and, if Saifganj be left out of account, it becomes gradually greater towards the east. It is most considerable in Balarampur**,

*This is now the Katihar *thana*.

**This is now the Gopalpur *thana*.

> which is the unhealthiest *thana* in the district. No reason beyond unhealthiness can be assigned for the changes which have taken place. The fatal epidemic of cholera in 1900 affected chiefly the western part of the district, which, but for this, would doubtless have shown much better results."

In the next decade, i.e., in the Census of 1911 the population of Purnea district was recorded at 1,989,637 or it had increased by 5.98 per cent. The number of births exceeded that of deaths during 1901—1911 except in 1905, 1906 and 1907, the aggregate excess being 34,000. From 1905 to 1907 heavy mortality was caused both by fever and cholera, the latter causing 43,000 deaths between October, 1905 and June, 1907. In spite of these epidemics the Census of 1911 had shown that there had been an addition of 1,12,308 persons. A large part of this increase was due to the influx of new settlers.*

During the 1911—20 period, Purnea suffered from epidemics of cholera every year from 1915 to 1919. The number of deaths during the decade was 650,000 and the number of births 6,64,000, the excess of births being 14,000. The total population in 1921 census was recorded to be 2,024,608, an increase of 34,971 over the population recorded in 1911. The natural increase for the decade amounted to 14,756 of which 12,104 were to the credit of the female sex. The explanation of this remarkable difference probably was that immigrants only figured in the vital statistics once and that is when they die; as male immigrants were more numerous than female immigrants, male deaths must preponderate in the statistics. The decrease in population was most pronounced in the Kishanganj subdivision where the population had decreased almost in every thana.** There was an overall increase of 1.8 per cent in the population. Most of the increase was in Dhamdaha *thana* where an extensive grass jungle was in the process of reclamation for purpose of cultivation.

During the 1921—30 period, the incidence of public health appears to have been rather good. Mortality from all the principal diseases was much lower than in the previous decade. A very serious outbreak of cholera occurred in 1925, when there were over 8,000 deaths. The disease was also in evidence in

*Census of India, 1911, Vol. V—Report, pp. 131-32.

***Census of India*, 1921, Vol. VII, p. 31.

1926, 1928 and 1930. The number of deaths from cholera during the decade was reported to be 31,500 as against 43,500 during 1911—20. The annual mortality from small-pox was only 730, as compared with 920 in 1911—20. There was also a marked decrease in the number of deaths ascribed to "fever". Nonetheless, the incidence of malaria was very high during this period and constituted the chief stumbling block to the health of the district. Even after allowance had been made for the common errors of diagnosis in reporting fever deaths, it is significant that this head accounted for no less than 86.6 per cent of the total number of deaths reported during the decade. In 1923, there was a heavy toll of malaria. Other bad years were 1924 and the three years immediately preceding the Census of 1931.

The total population of the district in 1931 Census was 2,156,543, the net increase being 8.16 per cent from the previous decade. Kishanganj subdivision continued its decline while the Sadar subdivision recorded a substantial growth. The growth of population in Araria subdivision was most pronounced. Despite its (district) reputed unhealthiness death-rate was distinctly below the average; death-rate per mile was 24.5 as against 28.7 birth-rate. The corresponding figures of birth-rate and death-rate of the other districts of North Bihar were 35.4 and 25.8 per mile respectively. But the natural growth of population lagged far behind that of any other districts of Bihar. Regarding the low fecundity of Purnea, W. G. Laccy, I.C.S., the Census Superintendent in 1931 had mentioned that "No other district in Bihar and Orissa is so backward in the production of human life. There are indeed some grounds, which will presently be mentioned, for suspecting that the record of births in this district may not be absolutely complete; but the omissions, if any, would not be sufficiently numerous to necessitate over considerable modification in the figures.... The truth seems to be that, whatever its past history may have been Purnea can no longer be considered unhealthy in respect of the directly destructive effect of sickness and disease; but the inhabitants of this district are so riddled with malaria, and their vitality has been sapped to such an extent by this debilitating scourge, that their fecundity is much below the normal".*

**Census of India*, 1931, Vol. VII—Report, p. 30.

The excess of reported births over reported deaths during 1921-30 was 84,263, while the net addition to the actual population was 164,975. These figures suggested that only about half of the increase was due to natural growth, the remaining half being attributed to the balance of migrations.

In the next Census of 1941 the population rose to 2,390,105 and the increase was 9.4 per cent from the previous census, due to better public health. Kishanganj subdivision showed a decrease of 0 7 per cent The other two revenue *thanas* Bahadurganj and Islampur recorded a decrease of 0 3 and 0.4 per cent respectively. The increase in population was most pronounced in the Sadar subdivision being 16 3 per cent while Araria subdivision showed an increase of 9.4 per cent.

In 1951 the population of the district was found to be 2,525,231, or the increase was 5 6 per cent An adverse balance of migration was reflected in the decline of the rate of growth. There was some emigration of Muslim population to East Pakistan after the partition of the country in 1947. Emigration of the Muslim population is said to be of temporary phase and a good deal of migrants are said to have returned subsequently.*

Kishanganj revenue *thana* recorded an increase of 1.7 per cent but Bahadurganj and Islampur revenue *thanas* suffered a loss of 1 7 and 1 2 per cent respectively The overall decline of population in Kishanganj subdivision was 0 7 per cent. In this Census Araria subdivision also recorded a decrease of 0 1 per cent The decline was in Araria revenue *thana* (1.4), but Forbesganj and Raniganj showed an increase of 0.1 and 0.9 per cent respectively. The reason for decrease in Araria subdivision has not been discussed in the Census report ** In absence of reported epidemics and with the good climate of the subdivision the decline in population seems peculiar. Like the previous decade the Sadar subdivision recorded a substantial growth of 11 per cent population. The increase was most pronounced in the Katihar revenue *thana*, being 24 2 per cent

In 1956 in view of the recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission implemented by the Bihar West Bengal Transfer of Territories Act, 1956, an area of 759 square miles with a population of 277,288 was transferred to West

**Census of India*, 1951, Vol. V—Part I—Report I, p. 30.

**Vol. V, Bihar, Part I—Report, p. 31.

Bengal. The transfer took effect from November, 1956 and the details are as follows* :—

Name of Revenue *thana*.	Police-stations.	Area in square miles.	Population.
(1) Islampur ..	Thakurganj ..	58	14,357
	Chopra ..	158	52,949
	Islampur ..	139	59,652
(2) Kishanganj ..	Kishanganj ..	180	66,810
(3) Gopalpur ..	Gopalpur ..	73	36,028
	Karandighi ..	151	47,492
	Total ..	759	277,288

The details of area and population transferred to West Bengal in pursuance of the Bihar and West Bengal Transfer of Territories Act, 1956 have undergone certain modifications as a result of demarcation of boundaries between Bihar and West Bengal.

The results of demarcation of boundaries have been published in a booklet by the Government of Bihar, Political (Special) Department, vide their letter no. SR/TT 01|60—432-C, dated the 12th January 1961.

Serial number.	Name of revenue *thana*.	Name of police station.	No. of villages.	Area in (square miles).	Population (1951 Census).
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Islampur ..	Thakurganj ..	12	336·40	14,357
		Chopra ..	124		52,858
		Islampur ..	120		57,317
2	Kishanganj ..	Kishanganj ..	286	246·79	63,743
		Goal Pokhar ..	94		35,226
3	Gopalpur ..	Karandighi ..	270	149.69	47,165
		Total ..	906	732.88	270.666

Handbook of Statistics of Re-organised Bihar, 1956, published by Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Government of Bihar, 1958, p. 6.

The area of district came to 4,239 square miles as against 4,885 square miles. The total population of the district remained 2,247,943 against 2,525,231 in 1951 Census

In the next Census of 1961* the population of the district had increased tremendously The population in 1961 Census recorded 3,087,428 souls An increase of 37 09 per cent is the largest increase ever recorded. This increase is calculated on the figure of population of 1951 as it stood after the population transferred to West Bengal is taken with account The reasons for this super-phenomenal rise have not been investigated Moreover, the trend of the growth of population as shown in 1961 Census is very peculiar Kishanganj subdivision which recorded decrease in every previous Census has recorded a remarkable and unexplained increase of 55 4 per cent. The increases in other subdivisions are . Araria subdivision (26 7 per cent), Sadar subdivision (38 3 per cent) and Katihar subdivision (1 9 per cent)

Katihar subdivision was created in 1956 out of the areas of the Sadar subdivision raising the number of subdivisions to four, viz, Araria, Kishanganj, Katihar and Sadar subdivisions. The subdivisionwise and revenue-thanawise population as enumerated in Censuses of 1951 and 1961 are given below—

Subdivision.	Revenue *thana*.	1951.		1961.
		Area.	Population.	Population.
1	2	3	4	5
Araria ...	(*i*) Araria	431	226,882	
	(*ii*) Forbesganj ..	308	193,904	
	(*iii*) Raniganj ..	252	116,814	
	Total of the subdivision	991	537,600	780,481

*The statement had been prepared on the basis of "The 1961 Census—an analysis of provisional figures" prepared by the Superintendent of Census Operations, Bihar.

Subdivision.	Revenue *thanā*.	1951. Area	1951. Population.	1961. Population.
1	2	3	4	5
Kishanganj	(*i*) Kishanganj ..	61	35,905	
	(*ii*) Bahadurganj ..	438	194,167	
	(*iii*) Islampur ..	326	126,483	
	Total of the subdivision	825	356,555	460,589
Katihar ..	(*i*) Katihar ..	356	249,155	
	(*ii*) Korha ..	421	194,725	
	(*iii*) Kodwa ..	403	414,762	
	(*iv*) Gopalpur ..	86	32,689	
	Total of the subdivision	1,266	891,331	906 526
Sadar ..	(*i*) Purnea ..	482	187,499	
	(*ii*) Amnaur ..	279	166,426	
	(*iii*) Dhamdaha ..	524	331,819	
	Total of the subdivision	1,285	685,744	939,832

The hand-out by the Provincial Superintendent of Census Operations on the basis of the Provincial 1961 figures has given the variation in population of the district during sixty years. The figures are adjusted by rule of three process taking into consideration the fact of a portion of Kishanganj subdivision and a sizeable

population going over to West Bengal with reference to the total previous area and population. The adjusted figures are as follows:—

DISTRICT PURNEA

Year.	Persons.	Variation.	Percentages.
1901	1,570,495	..	..
1911	1,687,622	+117 127	+7.46
1921	1,802,203	+114,581	+6·79
1931	1 949,319	+147,116	+8·16
1941	2,122,056	+172,737	+8·86
1951	2,252,159	+130,103	+6.13
1961	3,087,428	+835,269	+37·09

MIGRATION.

The incidence of emigration has always been remarkably small in this district in contrast to a high incidence of immigration. The people of Purnea are remarkable for their apathy to go out of the district in search of employment and are also allergic to hard work in the field. The population is sparse in comparison to the area, land is easily available and the rent incidence is low. These are some of the reasons why Purnea people are averse to emigration. A large floating population come into the district during the important agriculture operations. A good percentage of the population had their original homes elsewhere. According to the Census of 1901 only 2 per cent of the population were emigrants while 5.8 per cent were enumerated as immigrants.* The flow of immigration appears to have increased during the Census of 1911 as will be evident from the following observation made in the *Census Report*, 1911 :—

"In Purnea the foreign-born population is proportionately twice as large as in Champaran, representing 10 per cent of the total population. The immigrants

District Gazetteer of Purnea (1911), p. 55.

come mainly from the east, and in particular from Bhagalpur, from which it receive 72,000, Darbhanga (25,000) and Monghyr (23,000). It also receives part of the overflow from the Santhal Parganas and gains slightly from Malda, but loses by migration to the three Bengal districts of Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Dinajpur.

The actual number of emigrants in Purnea in 1911 Census was enumerated 199,000 out of the total population of 1,989,637. The percentage of emigrants was only 1.9 per cent of the total population.

The incidence of immigration showed upward tendency during the decade 1911–21. The number of immigrants was recorded 204,094 or 10.8 per cent of the total population in 1921 Census. The corresponding figures of emigrants were 27,821 or 1.37 per cent of the total population.** The influx of immigrants was from the whole of North Bihar and in smaller number from South Bihar; even from the adjacent districts of Bhagalpur and Santhal Parganas the male immigrants were more numerous than the female ones, which showed that the main motive of immigration here is not matrimony but the occupation of lands at a low rental.†

Regarding decrease in the number of immigrants as shown in 1931 Census W. G. Lacey, Provincial Census Superintendent had mentioned "that the decrease in Purnea is probably unreal, and may be due to defective recording of birth places in that district". The number of immigrants recorded in 1931 Census was 187,404 or 8.57 per cent of the total population. The emigration figures of the individual districts had not been compiled in the Census of 1931. Mr. Lacey had mentioned that the drop in emigration had been particularly heavy in Patna and Purnea.

The Census operations of 1941 were very much curtailed because of war expenditure and so migration statistics were not compiled.

The number of immigrants according to 1951 Census was 189,991 or 7.52 per cent of the total population. During the decade 1941–51 the flow of immigration had decreased. The

*Census of India, Vol. V. Part I—Report, p. 181.

**Census of India, Vol. VII, Part I—Report, pp. 104 and 107.

†*Ibid*, p. 106.

emigration figures from individual districts to other States of India were not compiled in 1951 Census. This information is also not available for 1931 and 1941 Censuses. The figures of 1921 Census *vis-a-vis* of 1951 Census have, therefore, been given below to give some indication of the extent of emigration from Purnea to other districts of Bihar.* :—

Within the State.				Outside the State.	
Total (1951).	Per 10,000 of general population (1951).	Total (1921).	Per 10,000 of general population (1921).	Total (1921).	Per 10,000 of general population (1921).
1	2	3	4	5	6
17,328	69	6,596	33	21,060	104

The above statement shows that in comparison to the picture of 1921 the tempo of emigration to districts within the State is on the increase but in the overall picture the balance is much more heavily tilted towards immigration.

Distribution of Population between Urban and Rural Areas.

The urban population of Purnea district in 1901 was only 31,439. In 1951 Census the urban population had gone up to 94,879. There were four towns, viz., Purnea, Katihar, Kishanganj and Forbesganj in 1951. It will be seen that the urban population of the district had increased about 202 per cent in course of five decades. The rural population in 1901 was 1,843,365 which went up in 1951 to 2,430,352 or there was an increase by 32 per cent. This will mean that the trend is towards more urbanisation. The percentage of urban population to the total population of the district in 1901 was 1 per cent which has gone up to 3.9 per.cent in 1951.

In 1961, the criteria for being declared a town have been changed. According to Census Rules a town means the place having Municipality, Notified Area Committee or cantonment or a place which has been declared to be a town. The concept of a town in 1961 Census is slightly different. Any place with the population of more than 5,000 persons, the density of more than 1,000 persons per square mile and if at least 75 per cent of adult male population is engaged in non-agricultural occupations, fulfils the condition of being a town according to 1961 Census.

**Census of India*, 1951 Vol. V, Part I—Report, p. 64.

According to this criteria in 1961 four more towns have been added, namely, Banmankhi Bazar, Araria, Jogbani and Kasba.

The population of Purnea town, the headquarters of the district in different Census years has been as follows:—

Year.	Population.	Variation.
1901	14,007	..
1911	14,784	+777
1921	14 102	—682
1931	15,474	+1,372
1941	19,036	+3,562
1951	25,060	+6.024
1961	40,716	+15,656

Peculiarly enough the Katihar town has a much larger population than Purnea, the district headquarters. The population of Katihar in different Census years has been as follows:—

Year.	Population.	Variation.
1901	9,761	..
1911	10,219	+458
1921	14,533	+4,314
1931	15,864	+1,331
1941	26,326	+10,462
1951	42,365	+16,039
1961	59,419	+17,054

Kishanganj, the centre of jute trade and the headquarters of a subdivision bearing the same name has the following population recorded in different Census years:—

Year	Population.	Variation.
1901	7,671	...
1911	7.563	—108
1921	7,934	+371
1931	8,946	+1,012
1941	10,424	+1,478
1951	15,903	+5,479
1961	26,918	+11,015

According to the old criteria the other important centre of jute, namely, Forbesganj which has important trade centre with Nepal, came to have an urban status in 1921. The population of Forbesganj since 1921 has varied as follows .—

Year.	Population.	Variation.
1921	4,968	..
1931	5,939	+971
1941	8,787	- 2,848
1951	11 551	+2,764
1961	15,896	+4,345

The population of the four places which have received the status of a town in 1961 Census is given below with a comparative population in 1951 :—

Place.	Population.		Variation.
	1961.	1951.	
Banmankhi Bazar	6,976	3,944	+3,032
Araria	14,077	9,607	+4,470
Jogbani	8,861	5,000	+3,861
Kasba	13,042	8,261	+4,781

Because of the inclusion of these four new towns, the urban population of the district made an appreciable increase from 94,879 in 1951 to 185,905 or the percentage of urban population to the total population is now 6 02

Purnea district remains and is bound to remain with a very considerable degree predominantly a rural district. Purnea lives in villages and the people of Purnea may be described to be living in villages. In 1951 Census there were 4,553 villages with 2,430,352 rural population. In 1956 in view of the implementation of the recommendation of the States Reorganisation Commission 930 villages covering an area of 759 square miles with 277,288 population went over to West Bengal. According to 1961 Census the total rural population in the district is 2,901,523 or it forms about 94 per cent of the total population.

It is quite clear that there has been somewhat a drift of the population towards the town. This is partially due to abolition of *zamindari* which has made the members of the ex-landlords to take to business or other pursuits and they are not keen to live in the villages shorn of their previous prestige.

The opening of communications which has been a marked feature of Purnea district had led a bigger turnover of trade and commerce and they are concentrated in the towns. There has been a great development in the markets located at Kishanganj, Katihar, Purnea, Kasba, Forbesganj and Jogbani.

There has also been a concentration of more and more Government offices in some of the towns which has also led an increase in urban population. All the towns excepting Jogbani, have development offices of the Block Development Officers. Jogbani is increasing in importance because of jute trade and trade of other commodities with Nepal, as mentioned elsewhere. The development of communications has also made the population easy to mobilise.

The development of Kishanganj market which is a very important jute centre has had a set-back since a portion of Kishanganj subdivision was made over to West Bengal.

Kishanganj town is virtually now a pocket, surrounded by West Bengal borders on the three sides (north, east and south) and this is responsible for the crippling of its trade facilities. With customs barriers and other inter-State restrictions Kishanganj market has naturally suffered.

DISPLACED PERSONS.

The partition of the country into two sovereign and independent States, India and Pakistan, in August, 1947 and the violent communal disturbances which both preceded and followed gave rise to a large-scale movement of population from Western and Eastern Pakistan to different States in India and *vice versa.*

Displaced persons from West Punjab and the North-West Frontier Provinces which are now included in Pakistan began to arrive in Bihar from July, 1947. The influx of refugees was rapid and many reached in the State of Bihar and the other States of the Indian Union. But large-scale movement did not begin until the second quarter of 1950 when there were fresh communal disturbances in Eastern Pakistan. several thousand displaced persons crossed over the border and entered Purnea district. In this connection it may be mentioned that before the recent transfer of territories to West Bengal from Purnea in 1956 it had a long frontier with East Pakistan in the Kishanganj subdivision.

The Census of 1951 had mentioned the number of displaced persons in Purnea district as follows —

Total population.			Displaced persons from West Pakistan											
			1946		1947		1948		1949		1950		1951	
Persons	Males.	Females	M	F	M.	F	M	F.	M	F	M	F.	M	F
15,525	8,452	7,073	2	..	46	44	27	17	38	1	2	8	3	4

Displaced persons from East Pakistan											
1946		1947		1948		1949		1950		1951	
M	F	M	F	M	F.	M.	F	M	F.	M	F
168	267	1,245	1,098	2,288	1,619	1,380	1,168	2,735	2,597	218	250

From the above table it will appear that the number of displaced persons from West Pakistan was 192 as against 15,333 from East Pakistan. From 1951 Census it appears that Purnea had to accept a good number of the displaced persons of East Pakistan. It was obviously due to its proximity to East Pakistan. The damp climate and soil of Purnea also suited to the displaced persons of East Pakistan. The number given in the Census and mentioned above cannot be said to be cent per cent correct. It is reported that besides the sponsored displaced persons who had been settled through the agency of Government, there were a good number of unsponsored displaced persons who went directly to the residence of their own kith and kin and probably they had not been included in the Census operations.

The flow of displaced persons continued till 1957 but had to be stopped due to strict imposition of visa system in 1957. The Government made due provisions for rehabilitation of displaced persons. The non-agriculturists had been rehabilitated mostly in the urban areas. The number of non-agriculturist families rehabilitated in Purnea district comes to 528. They had been rehabilitated at Bellouri, Khoksibagh, Bhatta Bazar, Kishanganj, Katihar, Purnea town and Chopra (the last place is now in West Bengal). Business loan to the tune of Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,000 and house building loan varying from Rs. 1,250 to Rs. 2,500 had been given to displaced persons for rehabilitation.

The agriculturists had mostly been rehabilitated in the rural areas. The number of agriculturist families rehabilitated in Purnea district is reported to be 1,252. The total number of displaced persons of West Pakistan who had been rehabilitated comes to 192 and of East Pakistan 16,037.* Various measures were taken for the rehabilitation of displaced persons. Firstly, lands to the tune of four to, six acres were given to each displaced family for cultivation. Loans were also given for purchase of seed, bullocks, agricultural implements and fodder. Maintenance grant for six months and house building loan had also been given to them. They are long-term recoverable loans. The average expenditure per agricultural family varies from Rs. 3,500 to Rs. 4,500.

The agriculturist displaced persons had been rehabilitated at the following places :—

Lalganj, Kasba, Chikni, Mohini, Biswaspur, Parasi, Champabati, Lachmipur Bagaha, Bela, Nikhrail, Hansdah, Dalkola, Bhagwanpur, Kantia, Khoksi bagh, Bellouri and Berhampore, Semra, Hajipur (P.-S. Katihar), Kurthia (P.-S. Katihar), Mirchaibari, Dighi, Abdullanagar I, Chandikatwa, Bellouri, Kishanganj, Milki, Laheria. Lakhanjari, Chandikatwa, Paikagola, Bela, Parade ground Purnea, Gohura, Purnea Court, Bela Pemo and Chahbacha, Sadalpur, Bela Basmatia, Dumaria, Muradpur, Dhamdaha, Parsahat, Jankinagar, Baijnathpur, Maranga I, Kochaili, Kajra, Madhubani I, Madhubani II, Bijuhar I, Gachpara, Abdullanagar II, Ramna Loha Singh, Marang[illegible]urahi, Rasarh, Bāgulabari, Rikabganj, Biju[illegible]adia.

LANGUAGES.

Hindi is the principal language of the district. There are several dialects of Hindi which are current such as Maithili, Kishanganja or Siripuria and Bhojpuri. Among the other main languages current mention had to be made of Bengali, Santhali and Oraon. Marwari and Gujrati are confined to smaller sections. Some Muslims write Urdu but the dialect they speak has a large admixture of Hindi words just as the Bihari Hindi spoken has a large admixture of Urdu words. In Census operations Urdu had not been computed as a separate language but had obviously been counted in Hindi The physical location of Purnea district has a clear impact on the languages and dialects

*The details have been supplied by the Rehabilitation Department, Bihar.

that are current. The proximity of the hill district of Darjeeling and independent State of Nepal is responsible for the presence of a good number of Nepalese within the district who speak Hindi with the outsiders but use Nepalese among themselves. In the Census operations of 1951 Nepalese does not figure in the language figures. Obviously the Nepalese-speaking people have been taken as Hindi-speaking. The proximity of West Bengal is the reason for quite a sizeable Bengali-speaking population. Hundreds of Bengali families are now indigenous in Purnea district. The Sirsabadia Muslims who live mostly in the villages on the banks of the river Ganga and in the Kishanganj subdivision have originally come from Maldah and Dinajpur districts of West Bengal and they continue to speak a peculiar dialect of Bengali. The Santhals and the Oraons are now indigenous in Purnea population and they continue to speak their own tribal languages of Santhali and Oraon.

In spite of administrative changes in Purnea district portions of which have now gone to West Bengal as mentioned elsewhere the following observations of L. S. S O'Malley in the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911) may be quoted with profit:—

"Purnea is essentially a border district. On the west it adjoins Bihar; on the east are typical Bengali districts; on the north it marches with the Nepal *Tarai;* and on the south it is only separated from the aboriginal races of the Santal Parganas by the river Ganges. The effect of its situation is noticeable both in the varying physique and character of the population, and also in the language. More remarkable, however, is the ethnical, religious and linguistic boundary formed by the river Mahananda. The country to the east is more nearly allied to Bengal, and the bulk of the inhabitants are of Rajbansi (Koch) origin, while to the west the castes are the same as in the adjoining Bihar districts. Musalmans number two-thirds of the population east of the river, but only one third to the west of it. On the confines of Dinajpur and Malda, again, Bengali is the mother-tongue of the people. The farther west one goes, the more faint become the traces of the Bengali tongue, till in the neighbourhood of the river Kosi in *pargana* Dharampur one comes to a stronghold of Mithila Brahmanism, where all connection with Bengal ceases.

"To go into further detail, the tract lying east of the river Mahamanda consists of *thana* Kishanganj, Islampur and Gopalpur, while the tract to the west, which comprises the greater portion of the district, consists of *thanas* Bahadurganj, Araria, Forbesganj, Raniganj, Purnea, Kadwa, Damdaha, Korha, Amur Kasba and Katihar. The character of the people in the latter division is akin to that of the people of Bihar; while the southern and the western portions of this area contain people who may be called strictly Biharis in their social relations and customs. The *thana* of Damdaha, which is contiguous with North Bhagalpur, presents the type of a truly pastoral country, where hardly Rajputs and others have, from generation to generation, devoted themselves to agricultural pursuits and to the rearing of cattle. The west of *thana* Raniganj and the north of Forbesganj are of the same character as Damdaha, but as we proceed eastward there is a considerable change In portions of *thana* Kadwa, in Gopalpur, Amur Kasba and Katihar, a large proportion of the population appear to be more Bengali than Bihari and speak the Bengali tongue, while the majority of those living along the border line between the two divisions speak a corrupt dialect, partly Hindi and partly Bengali. This state of things continues till the *thanas* of Gopalpur, Kishanganj and Islampur are reached. A portion of Kishanganj and Gopalpur borders on the districts of Dinajpur and Malda, while north Islampur touches the confines of Nepal and a small portion of the districts of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri. In this area the character of the people is like that of the inhabitants of the neighbouring tracts.

"*Languages.*—At the Census of 1901 the language of 1,773,000 persons, or 94.6 per cent of the population, was returned as Hindi, and of 92,000 persons, or 4.9 per cent, as Bengali. Dr. Grierson, however, estimates the number of persons speaking Bengali to be 603,000 or nearly one-third of the inhabitants. According to him, the dialect in question is, in the main, Bengali with an admixture of Hindi, but it is written in the Kaithi character

of Bihar, in which Hindi and not Bengali is written. This fact doubtless weighed with the enumerators more than the niceties of grammatical construction; and, as a matter of fact, it is extremely difficult in many places to decide with which of the two languages the local dialect should be classed for Bihari fades imperceptibly into Bengali and *vice versa*.

"*Maithili*.— The Hindi vernacular current in the district is the Maithili dialect of Bihari. It is spoken in its greatest purity by the Brahmans in the west of Purnea, who have a literature and traditions which have retarded the corruption of the dialect. This form of dialect is classified by Dr. Grierson as Standard Maithili, similar to that spoken in North Darbhanga and the Supaul subdivision of Bhagalpur; and it is estimated that it is spoken by 30,000 persons. In the remainder of Western Purnea and in the centre of the district a corrupt form of Maithili is spoken. It is locally known as Goanwari or the village dialect, and is called Eastern Maithili by Dr. Grierson. To the east it becomes more and more infected by Bengali, till on the east of the river Mahananda it is superseded by the Siripuria dialect of that language. The latter dialect is principally spoken by Muhammadans, but Hindus to the east of the river still speak Maithili.*

"*Bengali*.—The Siripuria dialect is a border form of speech, Bengali in the main but containing expressions borrowed from Maithil. The character of this dialect is described as follows by Dr. Grierson:—

'The western limit of Northern Bengali extends into the Purnea district. That language may be taken as occupying the eastern third of the district, that is to say, the whole of the Kishanganj and the eastern half of the Sadar subdivisions. In the Kishanganj subdivision, and in the Kasba, Amur and Balarampur** *thanas*, the Musalmans, who are said to be of Koch origin,

*Linguistic Survey of India, Vol. V, Part 2, pp. 13, 86-88.

**Now Amur, Kasba, and Gopalpur.

> speak a mixture of Bihari and Bengali, closely resembling the Koch-Bengali of Malda. This dialect is called Kishanganjia or Siripuria, and is returned as spoken by 603,623 souls. Although, in the main, a Bengali dialect, it is written in the Kaithi character, which is one of those used for Bihari. It is unnecessary to give an analysis of its forms, as it closely resembles, on the one hand, the dialects of Malda and on the other hand, in the forms borrowed from Bihari, the dialect existing in western Purnea.*"

In the recent Census operations Bengali finds a place in the language table but not Maithili or Kishanganjia or Siripuria dialect. We need not go in the question here whether Maithili is a separate language or a dialect, for our purposes it may be mentioned as it had been done before that Hindi has been taken to include the Maithili-speaking, Gaonwari-speaking and Siripuria-speaking people.

The impact of circumstances, acculturisation and administrative changes on the languages and dialects of Purnea should be a fascinating study but no detailed scientific study appears to have been done. No proper linguistic survey has been conducted after Dr. Grierson's study. The present position of the indigenous dialects of Purnea district, viz., Maithili, Gaonwari or Siripuria cannot be ascertained without investigation After the climatic improvement of Purnea since 1934 there had been major transformation within the district like flow of emigration, rehabilitation of displaced persons and a certain amount of weightage for Maithili as a separate language. These facts may barely be mentioned but no conclusions can be arrived at because of the want of a proper linguistic survey. Under such circumstances the language table as drawn up in 1951 Census can only be quoted to show the trend. The language table from the *District Census Handbook, Purnea* is as follows :—

	Persons.	Males.	Females.
Total Population.. ..	2,525,231	1,319,262	1,205,969
Indo-Aryan languages.			
Hindi	2,323,903	1,211,754	1,112,149
Bengali	133,399	71,725	61,674
Marwari	705	621	84
Gujrati	21	—	21

**Linguistic Survey of India*, Vol. V, Part I, p. 139.

	Persons	Males.	Females.
Other Indo-Aryan languages	7	7	
Munda language:			
Santhali	55,992	30,261	25,731
Dravidian language:			
Oraon	11,204	4,894	6,310

Bilingualism.—The following table will give the number of persons who commonly use another Indian languages in their everyday life in addition to their mother-tongue:—

Mother-tongue.	Total speakers.	Total persons returned as speaking a language subsidiary to that shown in column 1.	Subsidiary language.	Number.
1	2	3	4	5
Hindi ..	2,323,903	42,975	Bengali ..	35,333
			Santhali ..	6,498
			Oraon ..	1,034
			Marwari ..	110
Bengali ..	133,399	30,603	Hindi ..	29,708
			Oraon ..	630
			Marwari ..	265
Santhali ..	55,992	19,753	Hindi ..	17,451
			Bengali ..	2,254
			Marwari ..	48
Oraon ..	11,204	3,989	Hindi ..	3.576
			Bengali ..	393
			Santhali ..	21
Marwari ..	705	70	Hindi ..	45
			Santhali ..	25
Gujrati ..	21	5	Hindi ..	5

From the above table it will be apparent that Hindi is spoken by 92 per cent of the total population and this includes the Urdu-speaking people also. Bengali is spoken by 5.2 per cent and Santhali by 2.2 per cent. The adoption of Hindi as the national language of the country has naturally given a very great weight and there is no doubt that Hindi is adding to its popularity. Almost all the Government work in the district is done in Hindi. The Devanagri script of Hindi is widely used. The Kaithi script is still in vogue but declining in use Previously documents and applications in Civil and Criminal Courts used to be drawn up in Kaithi script and Government officers had to familiarise themselves with Kaithi script The younger generation of officials is rarely familiar with Kaithi script The other scripts which are in use are Bengali and Urdu. There had been quite a few prominent men in the last two or three decades in the district who had made substantial contribution to Hindi, Bengali and Urdu literatures.

The Kosi Project and the recent development in communication and trade relation with Nepal have brought in people speaking languages like Punjabi, Gujrati and Marwari etc , and the number of the people speaking such languages though very small must have increased

Religion.

In the overall population of the district the Hindus form the largest group and then the Muslims.

The majority of the population in the Kishanganj subdivision are Muslims. The other religious communities are in minority. The following table will show the religious population of the district according to 1951 Census.* It may be mentioned that in the areas transferred in 1956 to West Bengal, the Muhammadans were in overwhelming majority.—

Hindus		Sikhs.		Jains.		Buddhists.		Muslims		Christians.	
M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F	M.	F.
893,218	814,406	7	5	49	8	..	.	425,794	391,354	194	96

It is apparent from the above table that Hindus (1,707,624) formed about 68 per cent while Muhammadans (817,148) about

*District Census Handbook, Purnea, 1951, pp. 120-121.

30 per cent of the total population. The other religious communities came to only about two per cent. The proportion of Hindus is greatest in *thana* Dhamdaha and Gopalpur and Kadwa revenue *thanas* in the West and decreases as we proceed towards the north-east. In Bahadurganj revenue *thana* in the Kishanganj subdivision, there is only one Hindu to every two Muhammadans. The distribution of other religious depends on local circumstances. The Jains and Sikhs who are the principal commercial communities are chiefly confined to commercial places. Peculiarly enough in the Census table all the Jains, except one who is shown in the Bahadurganj revenue *thana*, were shown in the Forbesganj revenue *thana*. Similar is the case with the Sikh community. The appraisal shows that the religion table is obviously wrong so far as the Jains and Sikhs are concerned. The Marwaris who are mostly Jains are not only confined in Forbesganj revenue *thana* but are scattered at the several business centres, viz., Forbesganj, Jalalgarh, Kasba, Gulabbag (Purnea), Katihar, Barsoi, Kishanganj, Thakurganj and other places. Similarly the Sikhs are also scattered. The number of Sikhs (7 males and 5 females) is totally an underestimate. In Katihar subdivision there are villages, viz., Bharattal near Karhagola and other *diara* villages bordering on the Ganga where there are a large number of Sikhs since a long time past. They have landed property, business and other avocations. It is said that they came from Punjab along with Guru Tegh Bahadur Singh on his way to Assam. They have settled there as agriculturists and have totally mixed with the local people. Thus it is obvious that a good number of Jains and Sikhs have been enumerated in the Census operations along with the Hindus. The Christians were mostly found in Bahadurganj revenue *thana* in the Kishanganj subdivision, as out of the total Christians of 290 in the district 234 were in Bahadurganj revenue *thana*. The Christian population shown in 1951 Census table also appears to be an underestimate.

The majority of Europeans and Eurasian Christians who continued for generations because of the plantations in the district have now left, especially after the attainment of independence in 1947. The Christians are now mostly local converts. The history of the earliest Christian Mission Establishment in the district is given in the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* as follows :—

> "The earliest Christian Mission established in the district was that known as the Titalya Mission, which started work in 1816. In that year Mr. Schroeter

came to Titalya, at the suggestion of Major Latter, the Commanding Officer there, who was anxious that a missionary should learn Tibetan, in order to translate the Scriptures into that language. He hoped that Titalya might thus become a link between India and China; and in pursuance of this object, he went to Paris and brought a number of books on Tibetan and Chinese literatures for Mr. Schroeter's use. This collection contained some valuable works by Jesuits and other travellers on Tibet and the neighbouring countries, which had belonged originally to conventual libraries, and had been confiscated during the French Revolution. They were subsequently made over to the library of Bishop's College, to which Major Latter also presented a valuable collection of Tibetan manuscripts.

"In 1818 Mr. Schroeter received a salary from Government, in consideration of his studying Tibetan; and in 1819 he was engaged in preparing a Tibetan grammar and dictionary, in conducting a Hindustani service for the benefit of the Christian drummers, and in preaching to Lepchas or any other natives he met. Next year he died of fever, and Mr. LeRoche was appointed to succeed him, the Government offering to pay his salary. His constitution was, however, unable to bear the climate; and he died while entering the Thames on his return to England. Messrs. Reichardt and Maisch were next appointed to Titalya, but the death of Major Latter, founder of the Mission, at Kishanganj in 1822 led to its abandonment.*

"The only Mission now (1908) at work in the district is the Baptist Mission, which has a station at Purnea town and contemplates opening another at Rani near Nepalganj."

"The Baptist and the Roman Catholic Missions are still working in the district but the number of new conversions is very small".

*J. Long, *Handbook of Bengal Missions* (1848), pp. 235—37.

PRINCIPAL CASTES.

In the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* by O'Malley (1911) the strength of the principal castes was indicated as follows :—

(1) Sheikh	..	..	..	670,814
(2) Goala	..	..	..	124,734
(3) Rajbansi	..	..	..	103,002
(4) Musahar	.	..	..	56,819
(5) Kaibartta	..	..	..	53,374
(6) Dhanuk	..	..	..	41,854
(7) Gangai	..	..	..	41.570
(8) Tanti	..	..	..	41 076
(9) Hari	..	..	..	39,599
(10) Teli	..	..	..	34,258
(11) Dosadh	..	..	..	32,960
(12) Saiyad	..	..	..	32,399
(13) Jolaha	..	..	..	30,925
(14) Brahman	..	..	..	28,083
(15) Koiri	..	..	..	26,886
(16) Baniya	..	..	..	26,021
(17) Kewat	..	..	..	25,392

No castewise Census is being done in the recent years. In 1931 Census there was a castewise Census and the table is as follows:—

Caste or Tribe.	Persons.	Males.	Females.
(1) Bhumihar Brahman ..	3,693	2,203	1,490
(2) Bania	20,675	10,726	9,949
(3) Barhi	22,450	11,486	10,964
(4) Brahman	34,940	18,849	16,091
(5) Dhanuk	42 255	21,645	20,610
(6) Dom	4,446	2,237	2,209
(7) Chamar	26,173	13,386	12,787
(8) Dosadh	51,653	26,149	25,504
(9) Dhobi	9,240	4,943	4,297
(10) Goala	134,934	70,610	64,324
(11) Hajjam	19,084	10,064	9,020
(12) Halakhor	..	..	..
(13) Jolha (Sheikh Momin)	16,786	8,107	8,679

Caste or Tribe.	Persons.	Males.	Females.
(14) Kahar	9,277	4,904	4,373
(15) Kamar (Lohar) ..	17,326	8,911	8,415
(16) Koiri	24,694	12,820	118,74
(17) Kandu	6,193	3,282	2,911
(18) Kumhar	13,355	6,872	6,483
(19) Kayasth	9,046	5,142	3,904
(20) Kurmi .. .	12,774	7,192	5,582
(21) Kewat	36,854	18,878	17,976
(22) Mali	5 590	2,888	2,702
(23) Mallah	2,402	1,221	1,181
(24) Musahar	113,554	57,877	55,677
(25) Nat (Hindu)	2,974	1,537	1,437
(26) Rajput	106	30,523	.21,583
(27) Tanti (Hindu) ..	62,582	31,462	31,120
(28) Teli	35,323	17,965	17,358
(29) Turi	2,957	1,442	1,515

O'Malley had given a brief description of some of the castes and of a few other castes peculiar to the district. He had described Sheikhs, Goalas, Rajbansis, Musahars, Kaibarttas, Dhanuks, Gangais, Tantis, Haris, Telis, Dosadhs, Saiyads, Jolahas, Brahmans, Koiris, Baniyas, Kewats, Chapuals, Chapotas, Kurariars, Kondias and Banauts. His observations on castes like Goalas, Dhanuks, Brahmans, Koiris, Baniyas, etc , remain substantially true although because of the passage of time there have been some natural changes among them particularly from the point of view of occupation. For example, the Maithil Brahmans no longer wear the Maithil *p g* or the headgear as a rule and the majority of them cannot be said to be supporting themselves by cultivation. They have also taken up services and business. The Goalas do no longer follow "their hereditary occupation of herdsmen on the luxuriant pasture lands, which attract vast herds of cattle". Unlike O'Malley's days, Goalas take up agricultural labour as well if necessary. Certain castes or communities are peculiar to Purnea district and some recent investigations have been made at their villages. The results of the investigations would follow but it would be worthwhile quoting O'Malley regarding these peculiar castes. Such castes are Rajbansis,

Gangais, Chapual, Chapotas, Kurariars, Kondias, and Banauts O'Malley's observations about them are as follows.—

"*Rajbansi.*—The Rajbansis are a caste of mixed origin, some being descended from Mongoloid Koches, while others are of Dravidian stock. At the last Census, in the course of tabulation, Koch and Rajbansi were treated as synonymous terms, but in 1891 the Rajbansi and Koch were classified separately, the former numbering 52,356 and the latter 46,076; while 6,734 persons were entered as Deshi and 21,009 as Paliyas. The fact appears to be that there are four sub-castes, viz, Rajbansi, Paliya, Deshi and Koch. The Rajbansis are said to claim descent from the Koch Rajas, and the Deshi from the higher Koch Families, though they also often claim to be Rajbansis. The Paliyas and Koches are both inferior to them in social status, and differ from them not in feature, but very widely in colour, being generally of dark complexion, while the Rajbansis and Deshis are fair. The Paliyas and Koches are docile and quiet people, keeping themselves aloof from the people among whom they settle They are cultivators and also deal in grain and other articles, while the Koches in some places serve as palanquin bearers. As a class, all four sub-castes are very true to their word, and make good tenants, being punctual in payment of their rents"

"The Deshis are said in the *Bengal Census Report of* 1901 to be a subdivision of the Paliyas, but in this district they appear to be separate sub-castes. 'They do not', writes Mr. Byrne, 'intermarry', and will not eat together. The Babu Paliyas (as they like to be called) eat swine's flesh The others do not. The Deshis keep ducks, and the others abhor this Again, the Paliyas, unlike most Hindus, are not slaves to caste regulations. They work at times as oil-pressers, blacksmiths and weavers, and their women as midwives. But their women, and, indeed, all the women of Kishanganj, take no more direct part in agricultural operations than that involved in carrying the midday meals to the fields."

"The origin of the Rajbansis or Koches is disputed, but Sir Herbert Risley's conclusion is that 'the Koch,

Rajbansi, Paliya, Deshi and other varieties, by whatever names they are called, are descended from a Dravidian stock which may probably have occupied the valley of the Ganges at the time of the Aryan advance into Bengal. Driven forward by this incursion into the swamps and forests of Northern and North-Eastern Bengal, the tribe were here and there brought into contact with the Mongoloid races of the Lower Himalayas and of the Assam border, and their type may have been affected to a varying degree by intermixture with these people. But, on the whole, Dravidian characteristics predominate among them over Mongolian'. They are anxious to rise in the social scale and claim to be an offshoot of the Rajput clan. Feeling no doubt that to yoke cows in ploughs was inconsistent with this pretension, they renounced the practice a few years ago. Their claim to kindred with Rajputs is, however, untenable. Their appearance is unmistakeably Mongoloid; their women carry children slung in a cloth on their backs; they bury their dead; widow marriage is prevalent among them; high prices are taken from would-be bridegroom by the fathers or brothers of prospective brides before they consent to the marriage ; they do not wear the sacred thread, and they often indulge freely in intoxicating liquors.*"

"*Gangais*.—The Gangai or Ganesh is a caste peculiar to this and some of the districts to the east and south-east. They are apparently of Nepalese origin, and those resident in the British dominions are said to form only a section of the main body inhabiting Nepal. They set up prayer flags like those so commonly seen in the hills, and their features present a distinctly Mongoloid appearance, for they have a flat face, depressed nose, and generally fair colour. A common saying in that part of the district which the Gangais now inhabit is: '*Jahan jahan Kankai, Tahan tahan Gangai*', i.e., 'You will find the Gangais, wherever you find the river Kankai'. The saying is based on fact, for the Gangais abound only in the country traversed by the Kankai and its

*J. Byrne, *Purnea Settlement Report* (1908), p. 13.

old beds. The similarity of their caste name and that of the river suggest the inference that they have been called after it. They are a quiet people, good cultivators, who also earn a living by weaving and burning lime. They do not keep so much aloof from other people of the district as those of Koch origin, for one or two Gangai families will settle and live among other castes in the same village, which pure Koches will not do."

'There are two sub-castes called Bara or Babu and Chota. The latter are superior in status, as they abstain from pork and alcoholic drinks, in which the Bara Gangai indulges. The separation between the two groups is not quite complete, for a Chota Gangai will take a wife from, though he will not give his daughter to, a member of the Bara Gangai sub-caste. Some perform the *sraddha* on the 13th and others on the 30th day. When their paddy is in ear, they have a peculiar custom of going to their fields and calling out to the God of Plenty. *Khato Nabho Suaha*, after which they return home and immolate a pig to the deity. They rank with Hajjams, Malis and Sunris. At the Census of 1891 they were enumerated as Gangais or Gangautas, but the latter are a separate caste, many of whom live along the Ganges, a fact supposed to account for their name."

"*Chapual.*—Chapual or Chaupal is the name of a small caste of weavers found only in the Kishanganj subdivision, whither they are supposed to have migrated from Nadia in a famine year. They are quite independent of any other caste, and there is now no trace of their caste of origin. They have Maithil Brahmans as their priests. They worship Shiva and the other Hindu gods, but pay special homage to Bishahari, the god of serpents. They perform the *sraddha* on the 12th day after death. Infant and widow-marriages are practised; divorce is not allowed."

"*Chapotas.*—The Chapotas are usually cultivators, but some live by fishing. They have degraded Brahmans, allow widow marriage, and worship the ordinary Hindu gods. Amongst the major deities, Kali and Narayan are most reverenced, while

amongst the minor deities, Bishahari is the favourite. The offerings consist of goats and pigeons, and Tuesday is the favourite day for worship. They bury their dead, placing the corpse on its right side, with the head to the north. The usual *Sraddha* is performed for the propitiation of ancestors in general. They eat the flesh of crocodiles. They profess to be descended from a man who sprang from some betel-leaf which Siva spat out after chewing it."

"*Kurariars.*—The Kurariars are a criminal tribe of Purnea and the Nepal *Tarai.* They are also known as Byadh, i e., fowler, and their traditional occupation is to catch birds for sale. Many of them sell fuel, and it is not unlikely that the word Kurariar may be a corruption of Kutharia or Kurhalia, from *kuthar* or *kurhali,* the name of the axe used by them for splitting wood. They live in the jungle and subsist largely on jungle products. They have a bad reputation, and are often mixed up in dacoities and other offences against property, fleeing to the Nepal *Tarai* when wanted by the police. They claim connexion with the Tiyars, and will eat any food except cooked rice at a Tiyar's house, though the latter will not return the compliment. There was formerly a prejudice against eating anything cooked by a married daughter, but this is gradually dying out. They call themselves Hindus, but the principal object of their worship is Lalmohan Palwan, a deified hero who is reputed to have been killed by a tiger. They usually employ the village barber as their match-maker and as the officiating priest at their marriage ceremonies but sometimes degraded Kanaujia Brahman's serve them. They do not eat any unclean food."

"*Kondias.*—The Kondias are found only in Purnea and are said to be allied to the Kurariars. Like the latter, they were originally hunters, but have now become cultivators and menial servants. The connexion between the two castes is no longer admitted; they neither eat together nor intermarry, and are served by a separate class of inferior Brahmans. The favourite deity of the Kondias is Bishahari. They practise infant and widow-marriage."

"*Banauts.*—There is one class which appears to be peculiar to this district, viz., that known as Banaut. It is reported that they formerly belonged to the Goala caste and were called Mandals, but for the last 4 or 5 years they have been using the *janeo* or sacred thread, like high caste Hindus, and have been arrogating the title of Singh as if they were Rajputs. They are found in the Damdaha, Raniganj and Manihari *thanas*, and are by occupation cultivators and *mahjaans*."

The Santhals.

The Santhals, as the name suggests, are the people who had once settled in the country of Sant, and thereby were named Santhals meaning "People living in Sant". In Purnea district they have settled from Santhal Parganas and Chotanagpur The indigo planters brought them here.

The Santhals of Purnea district are distributed over different parts of Kishanganj, Katihar, Sadar and Araria subdivisions. They usually live in pockets close to one another and they are not scattered in small numbers. Their number according to 1951 Census is calculated on the basis of language table (D-I languages—P—109/*District Census Hand-Book of Purnea*). The total tribal language speaking population is 1,18,145 out of which the Santhali-speaking population is 55,992 So it may be said that there were at least 55,992 Santhals in 1951 in Purnea district. The language of the Santhals is known as Santhali which belongs to Austro-Asiatic family.

They have retained most of their original characteristics and are at par with the Santhals in Santhal Parganas so far as customs and manners are concerned. As in Santhal Parganas they call themselves "Hor" and trace their origin from a pair of male and female, viz., "Pilcha Haram" and "Pilchu Budhi". They still follow the old customs and manners to a great extent.

The community life of the Santhals of Purnea district centres in this village. They live a corporate life and are not individualistic in their outlook. Their corporate life of thought and action are observed in their social, economic and religious affairs. They build their houses on either sides of the village street which is usually wide enough for two bullock-carts to pass each other. Functional importance is given in building their houses. No one is normally allowed to enter the private room except the family members. Their family spirit or "Abge Bonga" is, according to

them, enshrined there. They also keep their small valuables there. They generally do not make windows in their houses for fear of thieves. They are very alert in keeping their houses and streets neat and clean. Usually they plaster the walls and have some painting of figures, geometrical patterns, birds, animals, etc. Recently they have started painting a cycle, flower or a chugging engine.

The material condition of the Santhals is pitiably poor. They manage somehow or other just to exist and their diet is very meagre consisting of rice and some vegetables. Meat they relish but games have become rare. The beverage of *Hanria*, rice-beer is commonly taken and is their elixir of life.

Their occupation is multifarious. Essentially pastoral and agriculturist they have started taking up jobs as cleaners, mechanics, etc. They also sell their labour as agricultural or other types of labour. They keep poultry for their own consumption. They have no cottage industries. They are very industrious and painstaking. They have a tremendous capacity to work in hot summer or shivering winter. They cannot even keep good seeds due to utter poverty and ultimately they have to take shelter of the cruel money-lenders who are non-Santhals. The average Santhal family is in debt and pays a big percentage of interest.

The social organisation of the Santhals has lived through ages. It has a wonderful resilience and adaptability and has gone on adjusting with the changing circumstances to some extent. The *Panchayat* as mentioned before consists of *Manjhi* and *Pranik* who may be described as the President and Vice-President respectively while there are two other executives known as *Jog Manjhi* and *Jog Pranik*. There is a dignitary "*Lasartangej*" who may be described as the censor of public morals. There are lesser executives in the social organisation like "*Gudith*" whose business is to inform the people about holding of the *Panchayat* or any other important function. A "*Sukuda*" collects information and informs "*Jog Manjhi*" particularly about the moral lapses. Previously there was a superior dignitary "*Desh Manjhi*" who controlled a number of *Manjhis*. There is no *Desh Manjhi* now in Purnea district. Apart from these there are also two priests "Nacke" and "Kudam Nacke" who are responsible to maintain right relation with the unseen world or spirits and deities. The last official is the "*Godet*" who gives information to all about birth of a child, death of a man, date of the marriage party, etc. He is said to be the messenger of the headman and collects dues for feasts or festivals.

Desh Manjhi is clearly a casualty of the expansion of the administrative machinery into the pockets of the Santhals The *Panchayats* of the Santhals used to settle criminal and civil matters between themselves. All this has now stopped The opening of the Development Blocks and the operation of law from the Police *Thana* and the Courts have naturally affected the Santhals who have now become restive and sensitive of their rights However, the *Panchayats* still settle the disputes arising out of a breach of traditional customs such as love intrigue between a boy and a girl of prohibitive step or the birth of an illegitimate child, etc.

The life-cycle of a Santhal in Purnea is of the same pattern as that of a Santhal elsewhere. As regards marriage, different types of marriages are practised as in Santhal Parganas Some of them are: marriage by kidnapping, marriage by forcing vermilion on the girl, marriage in lieu of physical labour, etc The birth of a child is followed by a ceremony in which the *Manjhis* and other important persons are invited. Marriage is usually preceded by love between Santhal boy and the girl Marriages are also negotiated *Marwa*" ceremony is performed in which a branch of Mahua tree is planted Feast and drinking of *Handia* (fermented rice beer) are common They are very fond of visiting *hats* and *melas*. Belief in witchcraft is still there but is slowly being liquidated

As regards "*Bitlaha* * it may be mentioned that due to impact of urbanisation and coming in contact with the Hindus they pay very little importance to it No *Bitlaha* has been performed in Purnea in the last three decades

All their functions are usually marked with feasts and dances and there is invariably a flow of *hanria* They are simple, straight and truthful They do not, as a rule, resort to any deceit. The women are shy, hardworking and gay by nature. They are very good cultivators and convert waste lands into good cultivated areas. They apply the term *diku* to all non-Santhals. Any marital relationship with a "*diku*" is unthinkable and unpardonable to the orthodox Santhals.

The Santhals are very sentimental and quick in decision They do not put up with injustice usually but if injustice is tempered with sweet words they may be completely won over. If they combine, their combination is difficult to break. When the Survey and Settlement work was started in Purnea in 1953 the Santhals were very restive and organised themselves against the Settlement Operations. It took some time to liquidate their

**Bitlaha* is an orgy of Vengeance for social pollution. For details please see the *District Gazetteer of Santhal Parganas* (P C.R C.).

obstruction. Some of the Santhals had taken to non-co-operation movement. When they take up a cause they do not flinch.

The State Government have sponsored Primary and Middle Schools in Santhal pockets and education is imparted free. The Welfare Department is sanctioning loans for their welfare. Any imperious approach to the Santhals will usually defeat the very purpose. The Santhals are no longer in their previous isolation and it is expected that there will be an all-round upgrading of the Santhals because of the present Government policy.

The Santhals of Purnea district differ to some extent from those of Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas. The impact of the Christian Missionaries on Purnea Santhals is small. That is one of the reasons why the Santhals of Purnea district are very backward in education and in other matters. The contact of numerically very small number of Santhals with the larger majority of non-Santhals has been more acute in Purnea district. The Purnea Santhals are seldom seen in the very scanty loin-cloth of the male Santhals in Santhal Parganas. The Santhal women in Santhal Parganas wear *sarees* like the women of the West Bengal. The edges of their *sarees* go at least a foot below the knee which is not the case in the Santhal women in Purnea. The well-to-do Santhals in the villages of Purnea are seen with *dhotis* and shirts which is rather unusual in the interior of Santhal Parganas. The Santhals now in Purnea district are not what they were fifty years back. Every aspect of their life is undergoing a change. Acculturation has taken place in their society. Contact with other castes has brought a great deal of changes in their culture.

Whenever there has been a change in the standard of living, they have better clothings, better fooding and better housing. They have become broad-minded and liberal. They do not conform rigidly to their tribal norms, values and standards. Due to impact of urbanisation they have come to know the value of education.

The *ojhas*, the medicine men are losing their importance in the villages. Now they do not always blame the witches or spirits for their diseases. They have more faith on the local doctors and compounders. They do go to the hospitals and take vaccinations. The Santhals in Purnea district have had more of changes than the Santhals in Santhal Parganas.

There is much more political consciousness among the Santhals in Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas and in the last elections to the State Legislature more of them voted for a political party that preached the idea of a separate State for the aboriginals. There, whatever be the reasons, the Santhals have a larger political

alliance with the other aboriginals. In Purnea. however, the Santhals have no such political consciousness and have no political affiliations with the other tribals or backward communities within the district. In Purnea they speak Hindi fluently besides Santhali and seem quite adjusted with the other groups in the villages.

Kulaiyas.

Kulaiya Mohammadans are a Sub-group of Sheikhs. They are an indigenous group of Muslims in Purnea district and are mostly to be found in Kasba, Araria and Purnea Sadar *thanas*. L. S. S. O'Malley has mentioned in the last Gazetteer that they are converts from Hindus and that they retain many of the Hindu rites and customs. He also thought that they owe their name from a Hindi word and he had mentioned about the prevalence of *Bishahari Puja* among Sheikhs.

Kulaiyas now do not accept these ideas about them. It has been, however, found that at Kashibari, a tola of village Sisauna, 12 miles east of Araria town, *Bishahari Puja* is still prevalent in a few illiterate families and that formerly they did not marry their own cousins. The old custom of not marrying their own cousins has also decayed.

The exact origin of Kulaiyas is not traceable and a few stories are current.

It is said that Jalaluddin Akbar had a group of force and their distinctive symbol was '*Kolah*', i.e., a round cap. They were posted at Jalalgarh fort. They were converted to Islam and formed a group called Kulaiyas. A few of them also say that they are very orthodox Muslims and are very particular about "*Khuda ka kaul*" (orders of God) and that is why they have been called 'Kulaiyas'. Some Sheikhs are of the opinion that the criminals during Mughal period were sent to this district and came to be known as Kulaiyas.

The members of Kulaiya group strictly intermarry among themselves. A few exceptions can be found out but they are not favoured. Exceptions were found at villages Gaiyari, Chandradai, Girda and Kharaiya.

Customs are strictly the same as in other Muslims with a few exceptions. Marriage is also a problem for the boys of this group and the initiative is taken from the side of the boys. A marriage procession is not accompanied with band or music. The marriage party is immediately entertained with *shukrana*, a type of *kheer* in which different fruits are put in. This *shukrana* preparation is a speciality of Kulaiyas.

Wedding is performed on the same day and the procession returns on the second day. The day following their return, a procession constituting of persons from the bride's side comes to the bridegroom's residence. They are entertained with a feast. This is known as *'adhauta'* or *'tamwalima'*. The bride and bridegroom return with them. The bridegroom has to stay for a period of nine days at her residence and during this period he is not allowed to meet her. Then he returns to his house with his wife She has also to remain for a period of nine days. During this period he is allowed to meet her.

Divorce has got its sanction but it is not popular. Widow marriage is allowed. A man can marry the widow of his elder brother but not the widow of his younger brother.

Their language is of the Indo-Aryan stock, i e., they speak a mixture of Hindi, Urdu, Bengali and Maithili. The illiterate Kulaiyas mostly use a mixture of Hindi and Maithili dialects with a liberal use of Urdu words. Dress and food are common to the other men of that area

Ornaments are exclusive to the women. The *bunni* or *Mangtika* is used by a married woman. It is tied on the centre of the forehead. *Haikal,* a long necklace composed of flat pieces, generally nine in number is commonly used. *Hansuli* (a neck ornament open at the back), *chhuchi* (wristlet), *kara* and *payal* (for the feet) are common. Rich women have now come to replace *hansuli* by a golden necklace and *chhuchi* by bracelets. *Besar* is used for the nose They generally use *bali* in the ears.

Daily life.—Daily life differs with economic and professional differences. There is no equality in their society and they are tied together only by religion. One set of them is well educated and earn their livelihood by service and remain in the urban area. The second set is cultivators who reside in rural areas and the third and the last set is agricultural labourers who earn their livelihood by working in the fields. Some of them have adopted business.

The quality of the food depends upon their financial position. Food is common to other sections in the area.

Poorer women work in the fields. Strict *purdah* is observed. Women mostly perform the household work. The Kulaiya houses are generally well-kept and clean.

A house of a Kulaiya is easily distinguished in a village by its very look. The house is well painted with mud and kept very neat and clean.

A Sheikh or a Saiyad is usually critical of a Kulaiya Muslim and there seems to be an economic competition with the Kulaiyas who are in majority in the area.

Shershabadia Muslims

Investigation was made by a Research Assistant at villages Baidyanathpur, Peepertola, Dilarpur, Goaganchi (Manihari P.-S.), Banka and Baretta (Barari P.-S.).

It is said that Shershah after conquering Bengal left some of his army men who originally came from the Punjab side, at Murshidabad and Maldah. This class of people were named after Shershah and were known as Shershabadia. After some time some Shershabadias came over to Purnea district. They are all Muslims.

Generally these people are six to seven feet tall and have got well built physique in contrast to the physique of the average Muslims of Purnea. They are very hardy and strong. From this it appears that they may have originally come from Western India, i.e., the East Punjab and West Pakistan. It is said that they are generally of variable temperament and may even commit murder on slightest provocation. From the records of the local police-stations (Manihari and Barari *thanas*) it appears that there are a number of criminals among the Shershabadias. The *thanas* maintain list of criminals for this community.

The Shershabadia Muslims are found only in Purnea district in Bihar. They are scattered all over this district, namely, at Baidyanathpur, Peepertola, Dilarpur, Amdabad, Goaganchi, Banka, Baretta, Meerkel and Saharia, etc. The population of this caste at Baidyanathpur village is about 600, at Peepertola and Dilarpur is about 500 each, at Banka and Baretta about 400 each. It was learnt from Md. Seerajuddin of Banka village that the population of Shershabadia Muslims in Purnea district is about 7,000. The customs and manners are same among all the Shershabadias of the district. They also claim that they are Seikh Muslims. But the Seikh Muslims do not accept them as such.

There is no hard and fast rule regarding the age of marriage. But they generally prefer early marriage. There is only one consideration that the bridegroom should be older than the bride. Among them the custom is that the boy's father goes in search of a suitable match.

The first offer done by the side of the bridegroom is called '*mangni*'. After that the persons from the side of bride come to

offer whatever they like to bridegroom in the form of *mangni*. The date of marriage ceremony is then fixed. Three days before the marriage women sing songs. The custom of smearing with *haldi* is common and seems to have been taken from local Hindus.

On the marriage day, when the marriage party finishes a light refreshment, the marriage rites begin. The *Mullah* performs marriage ceremony by chanting the lines of the holy *Quoran*.

At the time of marriage the bride uses '*burka*' but the face remains partially open. The ornaments and the dresses given to the bride by the groom's party are brought before bride's family. If they accept it gladly the fixation of *mohur* ceremony begins. The other ceremonies are like what are observed in other Muslim marriages.

The divorce rules are the same as in other sections of the Muslims. Their mother-tongue is Urdu but they speak a sort of Bengali language fluently. Besides they speak Maithili and to some extent Bhojpuri also Though the area is far from the Bhojpuri and Maithili-speaking areas but some persons of Bhojpuri and Maithili-speaking areas have migrated with Shershabadias; by living in contact with the Bhojpuri and Maithili-speaking they have learnt Bhojpuri and Maithili.

They live in mud and thatched houses which are made of bamboo and straws The houses are rather dirty and there is not much attention to sanitation.

Their main occupation is agriculture or selling labour. Some of them cultivate the land on *bataidari*. The Shershabadias of Baidyanathpur, Banka and Peepertola villages have more land. They give rupee one and one seer of any grain to the labourers who work in their fields. When they go in their fields they put on I*chhopi* (a kind of hat) on their heads which is made by bamboo. hat protects their body from the heat of the sun. They are very is hardy agriculturists and can cultivate deserted lands Their food of the same type as of the other classes of that status.

na The majority of the males wear *lungi* and *kurta*. Besides many of them wear *dhoti* and *kurta* which is not seen in other parts of India. The women wear '*saries*' as Bengali women and pass the upper end of the *sari* through the left shoulder and over the head. With *sari* they wear a blouse and petticoat under the *sari*. They also put vermilion mark on their forehead. The women do not use *burkah* in their village or elsewhere. The girls wear *sari* since 5 or 6 years. The influnce of West Bengal from where they originally came on their dress and ornaments is quite

apparent. The women are fond of wearing gold and silver ornaments. Their ear-rings are called *kanfool* and *kamal*. Nose-ring is worn either on the right side or both the sides of the nose and called *nak bali* and *nak banchi*. Various kinds of necklaces are worn such as *har* and *tabiz*. The Shershabadia married women do not use silver toe-rings as the other Muslim women wear. For the hands gold and glass bangles are used.

They observe the same festivals as the other Muslims do

They do not send their children to school. They, however, attach more importance to agriculture. There are two Matriculates, at village Baidyanathpur where their population is about 600. Their main calling is business and agriculture.

In every Shershabadia village, they have their own *Panchayat* which tries to solve the problems and disputes of the village. The head of the *Panchayat* is called *Mukhiya* Their *Panchayat* is similar to Hindu *Panchayat*.

The Gangais.

The Gangais of Purnea district have migrated from the borders of Nepal and settled in Purnea district. Their dress, ornaments and social life have an affinity with those of the inhabitants of Nepal *Tarai*. Matrimonial relationship exists between the Gangais of Purnea district and those of Nepal *Tarai*.

The Gangais do not take food from the hands of the Raj Bansis. Raj Bansis can take food from the hands of the Gangais. Bride's price known as "*chumna*" has to be paid to the girl's guardian. It may vary from Rs. 200 to Rs. 1,000 and above. Cattle, utensils and ornaments are usually given as *dan* to the bride. Territorial exogamy is not observed. Usually the dead are buried but cremation is also done. *Sradh* is performed after twelve days. The death rituals are performed by a special class of Brahmins known as *Kantaha* Brahmins. A purifying ceremony is done after *sradh* by the community *Gosain* who has to be paid. Widow marriage is not uncommon. *Levirate* and *Sororate* are also practised.

The dress of the females consists of two pieces of cloth. Heavy ornaments of silver for the ears, neck, arm and ankels are worn. Gold ornaments are confined to the richer section. The main festivals are the same as those of the other communities, namely, *Fagua, Sankranti, Dasahra, Diwali, Luxmi Puja, Kali Puja, Ekadasi, Janmastami* and *Jeetia*.

The principal occupation is cultivation or manual labour. The Gangais prepare *chura* (flat rice) and *murhi* (fried rice). Small earthen pots for putting in curd are made by women-folk.

The incidence of literacy is poor. The Gangais call themselves as Ganesh and use the surnames of "Lall", "Singh" and "Ganesh". At some villages heavier bride price is charged for a marriage of a widow, but a bachelor cannot marry a widow. This was found at Chikni Ghat, P.-S. Forbesganj.

It is peculiar that the regional difference stands as bar to marriage probably because of a difference in dialect.

The Gangais are found both in Kishanganj and Araria subdivisions. Despite slight regional variation, the Gangais of different subdivisions are socially, economically and educationally at the same par. It is peculiar that the Gangais of Kishanganj subdivision only in the entire State have been included in the list of Backward Class Annexure I. There does not seem to be any particular reason why the Gangais of other subdivisions of Purnea district should not be included in the list of Backward Class Annexure I.

Rajbansis.

This community is mostly found in a continuous belt to the eastern side of the present North-East Frontier Railway extending from Barsoi to Galgalia in Katihar and Kishanganj subdivisions respectively. The origin of Rajbansis is shrouded in obscurity. It is not known from where they have migrated to Purnea. Mr. Byrne, I.C.S., in his report on the Survey and Settlement Operations (1901—1908) mentions : "The Rajbansis claim to be an offshoot of the Rajput clan and feeling no doubt that to yoke cows in ploughs was inconsistent with the pretension they have renounced the practice, but the Mohammadans have not followed suit. Their claim to kindred with Rajputs is the shallowest. Their appearance is unmistakably Mongoloid : their women carry children slung in a cloth on their backs : they bury their dead : widow marriage is prevalent among them: high prices are taken from the would-be bridegroom by the father or brothers of prospective brides before they consent to the marriage and a price is taken even in the case of widow marriage : they do not wear the sacred thread, and they often indulge freely in intoxicating liquors. These are a few of the considerations that show how little of the Rajput there is in them."*.

Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations by Byrne, pp. 13-14.

The Dravidian characteristics may be said to . predominate but due to their long habitation in this part of the country slight changes in their physical features are not unexpected. Secondly, there have been changes in their outlook, customs, social, economic and religious status.

Our investigation rather suggests that the Mongolian characteristics predominate than the Dravidian ones. They have pale face with yellowish tinge, small eyes, flat nose, non luxuriant beard and moustache which are the main characteristics of the Mongolian race. They resemble the Nepalis in Purnea district. Physically the females are better built than males. The expectation of life for the woman is higher than that of the man. They are more energetic and have a better stamina. They not only do the domestic chores but go to the markets.

The Rajbansis claim a mythological origin. It is said that they refused to fight for Raja Birat on behalf of the Pandavas. This led to their disintegration. Some took flight out of fear of Raja Birat and from that time due to their flight they began to be called *Polias*. The men who did not take part in the great *Mahabharat* and remained in the country unmindful of Raja Birat's anger began to be called *Desia*. There is also another mythology. It is said that during the time of destruction of Khatriyas in the hands of *Parsuram*, these Rajbansis who were also supposed to be Rajputs, fled away out of fright. These men who ran away began to be called *Polia* and those who took refuge in forests and hills began to be called *Desia*.

Byrne in his *Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations* mentions that these two sub-castes of Rajbansis do not interdine. The *Polias* eat pig's meat. The others do not The *Desias* keep ducks and the other section abhors this. Again the *Polias*, unlike most Hindus, are not slaves to caste regulations. They work at times as oil-pressers, blacksmiths and weavers and their women as midwives. But on local enquiry it was observed that now they dine together and follow the same avocations but they cannot intermarry. Pig's meat is not eaten now. The *Desias* say that in the past they yoked the cow to the plough and pressed oilseeds and so they were looked down upon and the other section would not have inter-marriage. Cows are no longer yoked by the Rajbansis. Their surnames are Das, Sarkar and Mandal.

Due to impact of urbanisation there had been some changes in their dress. A few years back the males used to wear *kasti* and the females *bukni* for the lower part of the body. But now the males put on *dhoti*, shirts, *kurta*, *lungi*, *paijama*, *ganji*, and

trousers like any other section. The females mostly wear the old dress but some of them who are financially better off wear *sari*, *jhula*, under-garments, etc. The females generally wear coloured *saris*.

As regards ornaments they wear *bali* (ornament for the ear), *shankha* (ornament for the hand), *kara* (ornament for foot), *khasia* (ornament for hand), ring, etc. Silver and gold jewellery of modern fashion have also come into use. Rice is the principal food. Other food is common to others and varies according to financial status. The incidence of intoxication is very small. Toddy is not generally used but *ganja* smoking was found though not widely.

Marriage fee is paid to bride's parents. Love marriage is seldom heard. Marriage is settled mostly by the parents of the bride and the bridegroom. Marriage is settled before the caste *Panchayat*. Marriages are, more or less, restricted between parties. A day or two before the consummation of marriage *Satyanarain* is propitiated and *pooja* is offered. Widow marriage is also practised. Divorce is not permitted. *Levirate and sororate* marriages are also prevalent. *Mansha pooja* is annually offered mostly during the *Nag Panchami* day in the month of *Srawan*. *Mahabir pooja* seems to be of new origin which is also due to the impact of Hinduism. The other festivals of the said community are *Fagua, Sankranti, Durga Puja, Diwali, Kali Puja, Ekadasi* but they do not observe *Chhath* festival.

They speak a mixed language which is a medley of Hindi, Bengali and what is known as Kishanganjia dialect.

The incidence of literacy is extremely low. It was ascribed mostly to the absence of educational institutions and poverty of the Rajbansis. Recently the State Government have established some Primary, Middle and High schools in the midst of the habitation of Rajbansis and literacy is expected to improve.

As regards village organisation it is found that they have their own caste *Panchayat*. Litigation or social disputes are first taken to the caste *Panchayat* but now there are some litigants who go to the court of law. The Rajbansis are normally respectful, docile and simple. From enquiry made in the circle it appears that they are very regular in payment of their rentals. This fact is also mentioned in O'Malley's *Gazetteer of Purnea*, 1911. The village headman is called "*Mandal*" and he is usually elected. The post went by heredity before but now election is preferred. Though widow marriage is practised, divorce is totally discouraged. In case of any divorce, the Rajbansis call a meeting of *Panches* and

the culprit is given punishment. The culprit has to feed about 400 persons of the said community in punishment.

The majority of the population of this community are agriculturists or labourers. The main crops are paddy and jute. The labourers are very poor. The labourers belonging to *Polia* group go outside the villages and industrial towns where the male member gets Rs. 1-4-0 per day and females annas 14 per day. The *Desia* group of Rajbansis are mostly well-to-do and they do not require to go outside the village or industrial towns to get some work.

On local enquiry it was gathered that they are near about 2 lakhs in the district. Due to impact of urbanisation and spread of political ideas they are growing conscious politically. They now demand a seat for State Legislature and a seat for Parliament. They are, by nature, peaceful people and their relationship with other communities is good. But they feel they have not had a square deal from the other communities in spite of their numerical strength and in one belt.

Khangars.

There are Khangars in Katihar and Araria subdivisions. Khangars are found among other villages at Bardah, Manikpur, Bara, Dhila, Mohan, Lahsanganj, Simraha Dumaria, Chousa, Sankerpur, Basgara, Khairkhan, Pothia, Ladua (in Forbesganj P.-S.), Simarbari, Hansa, Pachira, Raghopur, Bansi Chaghari, Deothal, Kawaiya, Bariarpur, Chharapatti (in Raniganj P.-S.), Singhia, Kohbara (Purnea Sadar), Pausi, Tikali, Hundeli, Jouniya, Harfara, Dhirganj, Keotiya (in Katihar P.-S.). Their surnames are *Mandal, Das* and *Biswas*. They claim to belong to *Kashyap Gotra*. They speak Hindi and their dialect is Maithili. They prepare *Chura* and *Murhi*. Tea is a favourite beverage for them. Chewing of betel is very common. They are very fond of visiting *melas* and almost in every month *mela* is held in Purnea district which is one of the important causes to bring poverty among them.

As regards education they are very backward. A few years back they were quite illiterate. But they have been influenced by urban people as a result of which they have changed their outlook. They are in favour of co-education.

There are two groups among the Khangars in Purnea district. Khangar and Poa Khangar. The Khangars of Araria subdivision consider themselves superior to the Khangars of Katihar subdivision. Previously there was no marriage relationship between

the two sections but the restriction is being slowly removed. An interesting fact is that the Maithil Brahmins act as the priest in marriages. Widow marriage and sororate are in vogue. Both cremation and burial are practised. *Sradh* is performed after 12 days. The main festivals are the same as observed by the other Hindu communities. During *Dewalipuja* cattle worship is done and a pig is brought for the 'darh' rituals which is also known as *hurbai*. The produce of a new crop is eaten only after *nawanya* ceremony and the Brahmin priest is fed. This is probably an influence of Bengal where this is very common.

The main occupation is cultivation or to work as agricultural labourers.

Some peculiar festivals are observed by the Khangars. Almost every Khangar village has a tutelary deity (*Gramya Devata*) The deity is often called '*Gosai*', '*Bisheri*', '*Bhimsen*' or '*Pakeshwar*'. On *Srawan Sankranti* day goats are sacrificed for the welfare of the village. Besides village deity there are also household deities

Essentially a cultivating class, their festivals are associated with the seasons, live-stock, and crops At *Sirua* festivals fishing is done collectively At *Dewali* cows are worshipped and in *Ashwin* month (September-October) bread preparation of rice powder with images of rice powder are taken on a plantain leaf to the field and God is propitiated for a bumper crop This festival is known as *Hak-Bak* ceremony which is, however, a taboo for the women folk.

The Khangars of Purnea district claim that originally they came from Bundelkhand, from where they migrated to Nepal *Tarai* and then to Purnea. In some of the villages of Khangars remnants of a political organisation are found for example, in Dhirganj village the Khangars claim to belong to a Raja family while those at Harfara claim to be of *Dewan* origin. Khangars of Panki village claim to be of *Sepahi* (Soldiers' family). The Khangars are politically conscious. A year ago, their boys reading in schools and colleges used to get stipend from the Welfare Department, Bihar, Patna, but now-a-days the stipend has been stopped as the Khangars of Purnea are not held to be a tribal.

The Khangars of the Purnea district are as a class completely different from the Khangars of Ranchi district. Even the general features are different. The Purnea Khangars do not speak Mundari nor do they claim that they have migrated from Chotanagpur. They do not observe the essentially Munda social customs. There is no inter-marriage between the Khangars of Purnea district and the Khangars of Ranchi district.

It does not appear to be proper to group the Khangars of Purnea district with the Khangars of Ranchi district. The same title of Khangars to the two different communities has led to some confusion and some concessions had also been given to the Khangars of Purnea district as a sub caste of the Mundas, which is a Scheduled Tribe.

In the recent years the Khangars of Purnea district are becoming politically conscious. In the present State Legislative Council (1960) there is a Khangar councillor. Some members of the Khangar Community of Purnea want to be declared as an offshoot of Munda tribe taking advantage of the fact that there is a Khangar tribe in Ranchi district in Chotanagpur. As mentioned before, the Khangars of Purnea have practically nothing in common with the Khangars of Ranchi district. The present move is in strange contrast to a group movement among them. Some years back when some of the Khangars declared themselves as *Kharag* Rajputs and took the sacred thread. All this will show that material gain is the target. The investigations rather suggested that while the Khangars may be classified as a Backward Class of Annexure I, it may not be proper to include them as a Scheduled Tribe

The Tiars

Investigation regarding the Tiar caste was made at Tikapatti and Coolipara villages in Purnea district.

Regarding the origin of Tiar caste, Moti Prasad of Tikapatti village said that a Rajput Raja, Etwal Singh of Lalpur (near Nepal) was attacked by a Nepali Morang Raja, Mirchai Singh. Etwal Singh was put to prison. After some time Etwal Singh's son Chintamani and his son Jai Singh came to power. Jai Singh asked his father Chintamani about his grand-father and was told about his imprisonment by Mirchai Singh. Jai Singh took the consent of his father and invaded the Morang kingdom. On his way to Morang he met some women who were drawing out water from a well. On enquiry he came to learn that they were maid servants of Raja Mirchai Singh. They also told him that their husbands were jailed by that Raja. Thereupon Jai Singh came to know the secrets of the jail from those women and by breaking the gate of jail he released his men. He asked them to stand and wait and he himself went to punish Raja Mirchai Singh. In the meantime the released men fled away. Jai Singh after putting Mirchai Singh to jail found none of them there. He went out in search of the fugitives. After a hard chase he saw two of them in a distant jungle cutting thatch grass. On being questioned they said that

they belonged to a warrior class. Seeing them cutting grass Jai Singh told them in anger: "Go and do the work of making strings from straw and be called Tiar caste". From that time this class of people came to be known as Tiars. On the basis of this story they claim that they originally belonged to the Rajput caste. The Rajputs do not admit the claim of the Tiars to be Rajputs.

There are 30 houses and one hundred fifty Tiars at Tikapatti, 38 miles south from Purnea. This caste is found scattered in Purnea and Bhagalpur districts. The life cycle of the Tiars is substantially the same as that of the ordinary Hindus.

There are about five sub-castes in Tiar, namely, Palwar, Gajpurea, Suryavansi, Parihar and Rajbansis.

Widow marriage is not uncommon. At Tikapatti there have been eight widow marriages in recent years. There is divorce system. If any one divorces his wife he will have to pay some money to her. Inter-caste marriage is prohibited among them. The community prefer *parda* among newly-married couple As days roll on, they give up *parda*. After giving birth to one or more children they go to field and earn their bread. As prevalent among other Hindus in many parts of Bihar the Tiar also follows the same custom regarding funerals. They bury the dead bodies of children aged about two or three years. But the dead bodies of grown-ups are burnt on the bank of a river.

Occupation.—According to the villagers of Tikapatti and Coolipara their main occupation is fishing. The Tiars of Tikapatti have left fishing because the river Kosi has dried up. But Coolipara Tiars are still busy in fishing. Besides they make ropes from straw (*Munj*) which is generally found on the bank of rivers. Tiars usually live in villages on the rivers which give the two occupations of fishing and making ropes out of straw. They also work as agricultural labourers, cultivators or *biri*-makers, Tiar women at Tikapatti make beautiful mats which are sold for a rupee. A woman can make 2 or 3 mats in a day.

The common festivals of the Hindus like *Holi, Dipawali, Ram Nawami, Nag Panchmi, Chhat*, etc., are observed. They wear the same type of dress and ornaments as the other Hindus of the area.

Houses.—The houses of Tiar caste are made of straw and bamboo. The houses are spotlessly clean and tidy. Every now and then they prepare a thick liquid mixture of cowdung and yellow soil and paste it over the floor and the walls of their houses. It makes the walls and the roof appear like plastered ones.

They are very backward in education. About 3 per cent are literate at Tikapatti. Only five Tiar children attend the Primary school at the village. Poverty generally makes them use the children earn money and they cannot afford to send them to the school.

In addition to statutory *Grqm Panchayat*, they are governed by a caste *Panchayat* also, which plays an important role in the settlement of their dispute and problem. The caste *Panchayat* is a body of five important men of a village. The head is a *Mukhiya* who is also called *Maiar*. There is a provision of a Deputy *Mukhiya* also who is called *Nayab*. Any type of dispute among them is taken to the caste *Panchayat* at the first instance. It tries its best to settle the dispute but in case of its failure the case is taken to the statutory *Gram Panchayat* and other Government institutions.

Musahars.

Musahars are included in the list of Scheduled Castes. The actual population of Musahars cannot be ascertained as no caste-wise population figure is available.

Musahars of Mirganj, Khidlichak and Rangpura villages in Dhamdaha police-station were studied. They are very poor as a class and depend on their physical labour for daily food. Even to this day some of them were found to be eating rats.

Most of them have settled here since the days of indigo cultivation about a century back.

They form two distinct types, one is called *Magahi* and the other *Tirhutia* The *Magahis* bury their corpse while *Tirhutias* cremate. There can be no marital relation between them.

The language of the *Magahi* is synonymous to that of the Musahars of South Bihar. The *Tirhutia* Musahars are by nature calm and courteous. The *Magahi* Musahars are said to be rather blunt.

The *Magahi* Musahars were economically better off during indigo cultivation and manufacture where they were engaged. With the end of indigo cultivation their economic position had declined.

The Musahars have a separate caste *Panchayat*. The highest executive of the *Panchayat* is called *Marar*, the next to him in rank is called *Dewan* and the lowest is called *Jandar* or *Sipahi*. *Jandar* is responsible for the inflictment of any punishment upon the guilty. The money realised as fine from the accused by the *Panchayat* is not spent properly. Half the amount realised from

the guilty person is paid to the suffering party and the other half is extravagantly spent by the *Panchayat* in a feast.

Some of them were found to be polygamous.

Divorce is common among them. A divorce can be taken either by the husband or by the wife with the help of the Caste *Panchayat*. A certain fine is paid to the Caste *Panchayat* by the person who seeks divorce as imposed by the *Panchayat*. Intoxication is their main vice Child marriage is prevalent.

The incidence of education is very poor. Among a total population of about 600 Musahars in village Mirganj, P.-S. Dhamdaha, only a few can read and write. Only five children go to local Middle school. They are rather allergic to education. Economic poverty is not always the cause as they would not send their wards even when there are schools in the vicinity.

They are complacent and would not offer co-operation in work even for their own benefit The *Mukhiya* of Rangpura *Gram Panchayat*, under which jurisdiction the village Mirganj falls informed that they were not ready for offering voluntary labour (*shramdan*) in the construction of a well in their area. The matter was investigated into and found true. They mostly rely on Government and do not want to take any initiative.

They also engage themselves in criminal activities and from a list of dacoity cases in Dhamdaha P.-S. for the last ten years, it was ascertained that in most of the dacoity cases, they were suspected and in some cases they were convicted also. They are sometimes also implicated by rich people. The main reason is their denial to work for them on low wages.

The Oraons.

The Oraons are found in all the four subdivisions of Purnea district. According to the 1951 Census, as classified in "Social and Cultural Tables" the total population of Oraon in Purnea district is 11,204.

Oraons of Oraon Toli near mohalla Bhatta Bazar, Purnea, village Jamunia nine miles north from Dhamdaha and village Tarauni six miles south-west from Dhamdaha were studied.

They have originally migrated from Chotanagpur about 150 years back and at Purnea remain completely detached from their ancestral home. They settled here as agricultural labourers and *bataidars*. They were looked down by the non-aboriginals and

were called *Dhangars*. They were mostly brought by the European Planters.

But now with the contact of some educated aboriginals and Christian Missionaries, they call themselves Oraons and do not appreciate the word *Dhangar*. Some non-aboriginals still call them *Dhangars*.

The females are physically stronger and they can be easily distinguished from the non-aboriginal women but it is rather difficult to make out an Oraon male from a non-aboriginal male in villages.

The Oraons as a group occupy a contiguous territory and speak a common dialect. The political authority of their own social organisation is fast declining due to the set-up of the administration and their *Panchayat* system has been reduced to a Caste *Panchayat* only. They maintain a very good relation with their non-aboriginal inhabitants in the villages They are divided in several clans. A village is inhabited by members of different clans Their *killies* or septs usually bear the name of animals.

The family is patrilocal and father is the head of the family.

They do not have any dormitory and they have not even heard the name of a *Dhumkuria* (dormitory), a common institution among the Oraons of Ranchi district.

The birth of the child is not celebrated with any special festivity. The child is named usually by the day of birth. The child along with the mother is given bath on the eighth day.

Adult marriage is the usual rule. The initiative for a marriage is taken by the boy's side 'Agua', a go-between is engaged for the settlement of a marriage. '*Handia*' is a common drink particularly in any marriage negotiation and in marriage ceremony. The marriage ceremony is performed at the residence of bride.

Polygamy is allowed. Widow marriage is in practice and a widow can get herself remarried even after the birth of a few children.

Divorce may be asked for either by the husband or by the wife. Divorce is generally taken either with the help of *Panchayat*, or village council. Adultery or witchcraft of a wife is sufficient for the husband to get a divorce.

The dead body of a person who succumbs to normal death is usually buried. The corpse of a poor person is buried due to the lack of money, otherwise they prefer cremation.

The dead body of a pregnant woman or of a woman who dies after a few days of the birth of the child is rather badly treated. Thorns are pushed in her feet and eyelids are sewn and the dead body is carried to a distant place for the burial. It is believed that such a dead body turns into a malevolent spirit and harasses the members of the family. Moghra Oraon, a resident of Oraon Toli, near Bhatta Bazar, Purnea town informed that his wife had died after a few days of the issue of a child. He believes that she harassed them badly and holds her responsible for the death of his one child.

They believe in ancestor worship and are afraid of the malevolent spirits. But this conception is receding and now they usually do not take any outbreak of disease as the working of a malevolent spirit though they are very afraid of witchcraft. They regard themselves as a branch of Hindu community and they are acculturing very fast.

Their most important festival is *Karma Dharma* which falls in the month of August or September. They also participate in *Holi, Dusera, Dipavali* and *Chhath*. The day on which *Karma Dharma* is celebrated has its unique importance and they enjoy the day in group dancing and group singing.

There is another important festival prevalent among the local Oraons. They perform 'Behula Puja' with great pomp. They offer milk, banana and parched rice to Behula Mata. The local practice is to keep milk, banana and parched rice in a ditch and it is their firm belief that snakes and serpents would drink off the milk so kept in the ditch and also swallow the bananas and parched rice. During the Puja the priests numbering three to four persons dance round the Behula Mata throughout the day and night (8 A.M. to 2 A.M. in the night). They believe that 'Behula Mata' would be propitiated by such dance and music.

This festival is clearly the impact of the Behula story and the cult of snake worship which is prevalent throughout East Pakistan and West Bengal and portions of Bihar including Bhagalpur district. The story is that Monsa, the presiding deity of the snakes wanted Chand Sudagar, an ardent worshiper of Lord Shiva, to worship her. Chand Sudagar persistently refused. Chand Sudagar's only son Laxinder was married to Behula and through Monsa's device the bridegroom was bitten by a snake. Behula would not allow the body to be cremated but remained floating in the river for months with the putrefied body of her husband. Her devotion moved Monsa who moved Laxinder and through Behula Chand Sudagar worshipped Monsa thereby Monsa cult was firmly established. There is still a big *mela* at

Champanagar in Bhagalpur town to celebrate the occasion. Apparently the simple minded Santhals have mixed up Behula and the snake into a mythical goddess.

The main source of entertainment is their group dance and song but the constant contact with the local Hindus has impressed upon them not to participate in some activities. At village Tarauni, P.-S. Dhamdaha, it was found that group dance has completely been out of practice and their elders look down on it. The Oraons of Purnea town had represented Bihar in tribal dance and song and they gained the high reputation of being the champion in the contest on the celebration of Republic Day in New Delhi. The Government of Bihar have been kind enough to sanction a house for them. But there is also a great opposition to such public display of tribal dance

Religious beliefs.

The last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911) at pp. 58-59 mentions : "In this district there is only a faint dividing line between the religious beliefs and practices of the lower class Hindus and Muhammadans, which has been well illustrated in Mr. Byrne's Settlement Report . 'In every village can be found a *Kalıasthan*, and Hindus and Muhammadans celebrate their characteristic festivals together. At the time of marriages, Muhammadans perform some ceremony at the Bhagwati Asthan and put vermilion on the bride's forehead. Attached to almost every house, even of Muhammadans, is a little shrine called Khudai Ghar or God's house, and prayers are offered there in which the names of Allah and Kali both figure. When ill, even Muhammadans call in a Hindu Ojha, who recites some *mantras* over the sick man. They freely offer goats, fowls, pigeons and the first fruits of trees and crops to purely Hindu deities, and especially to the village godling, who generally lives in the most convenient tree. The actual sacrifice is done by a Hindu. Hindus and Muhammadans alike yoke cows in their ploughs in this locality. All the low class Hindus and the degenerate Muhammadans believe implicitly in evil spirits. The following plan is adopted to avert their influence. Small offerings of sugar, spices, bread and flowers are made to the trees in which the evil spirits reside. Then on a Tuesday or a Saturday towards the end of the month, an earthen vessel is filled with these offerings. This is placed at the nearest cross-roads. The evil spirits have been bribed to leave the village by the offerings, and they attach themselves to the first man who touches the earthen vessel, and accompany him to his home and abide with him. The most popular deity among the lower grades, both Hindu and Musalman, is Devata Maharaj and his door-keeper Hadi. His abode

and temple are very primitive. A long bamboo is planted in the ground, and from it are suspended an old winnowing-basket, a bow, an old fishing net and a hook. This is the abode of the deity and his door-keeper and the usual petty offerings are made to them there. Geian means the spirit of a dead man. Their shrines also are nothing more than two long bamboos stuck in the ground. Dhobis, Musahars and Jolahas worship Geians under various names.'

"Another quaint instance of superstitious belief is the manner in which cultivators act when their crops are damaged by insects. A black earthen pot which has already been used in cooking, is marked on the bottom with the sign of a cross in lime, and placed in the middle of the field. It is called *tatka,* and it is believed that, after it is set up, the worms leave the field. It will not surprise the reader to learn that this is not always the case. There is another kind of *tatka*, consisting of a sealed paper in which an order to the worms to leave the field is written The seal is made with a pice or a rupee, and the paper is hung in one of the corners of the field."

It is only natural that due to the long association of the two major communities living in the same villages, there should be a certain amount of fusion in their beliefs and outlook of life. Both these communities have shared the sorrows and joys of each other and many of the festivals of one is joined by the other The Muharram *Tajias* are usually borne on the shoulders by the Hindus and the Durga Puja *Akharas* are filled up by the Muslims. There has been a sense of brotherliness and next-doorness which, however, had been marred very occasionally by communal disturbances which were quickly put down.

Some of the observations of O'Malley in the quotation above are no longer correct. Hindus do not yoke cows in their ploughs now. The implicit faith in evil spirits of the Hindus and Muslims mentioned by O'Malley is also not very correc Spread of medicine and education have cut at the roots of most of the superstitions. Belief in omens and religious seals (*taliz*), however, still continues.

Social Life.

Regarding the social life of the principal communities belonging to the two main religious sections of Hindus and Muslims of Purnea district, there is nothing very exclusive to distinguish them from their brethren in other parts of Bihar. Some of the communities had been specially described separately. Generally speaking, the joint family system is slowly breaking up. The transfer of self-acquired properties through wills is becoming

common and is a sign of the weakening of the old joint family ties. Most of the people in the towns have their roots in the villages but their ancestral properties in the villages are mostly partitioned and neglected. Very few people who have once taken to urban life either because of profession or service or otherwise go back to their village homes after retirement or in old age even if they have made considerable improvements to their ancestral houses.

The old traditions and customs of marriage still prevail. It will not be proper to say that there has been a definite loosening of the traditional restriction on marriage alliance, in the imposition of taboos for different castes and sub-castes for marriages. There have been deviations particularly amongst the educated Hindus but such deviations are very few. The number of civil marriages is extremely small and is more common among the Brahmo and other advanced communities. The economic dependence of women still continues although they hold an important place in the family. Their position in society from the economic point of view is unenviable. *Dowry* system is still prevalent among the principal castes of the Hindus. There has, however, been some improvement in marital age. Pre-puberty marriages for girls are not much looked up to now. In the educated classes the bridegroom is usually above 21 years of age and the girl above eighteen years. There is a definite move for postponing the marriage age but this is confined to only among the intelligentia and the educated classes.

It is unfortunate that Purnea district should have received a certain notoriety so far as prostitution is concerned. As has been mentioned elsewhere, there are a large number of *melas* and fairs which continually go on throughout the year at different places of the district. One of the usual features of such *melas* and fairs has been the presence of a number of prostitutes who raise their small tents or *rautis* at one end of the *mela* ground. There was a time when there used to be hundreds of prostitutes and dancing girls in Khagra *mela* and they used to earn thousands of rupees and spread infection. Even the ordinary weekly *hats* in this district used to be visited by prostitutes who would sell themselves for a paltry sum and spread venereal diseases. All the important towns of Purnea district had a number of prostitutes and dancing girls. The *zamindars* and other influential people who sponsored the *melas* and *hats* for financial purposes used to patronise these unfortunate women and encourage their stay as a matter of attraction for the visitors.

It is a good sign that this type of selling vice in an open manner is falling into disuse. There has been a certain amount

of moral propaganda supported by statutory restrictions and the virulent incidence of prostitution in this district is now on the decline. The illegal traffic in girls was also an unfortunate crime connected with the high incidence of prostitution in this district. The *melas* where thousands of people usually congregate were exploited by the unsocial elements to decoy or kidnap the young girls. This has also been controlled to a very great extent. Drinking and gambling in the *melas* and *hats* have been somewhat controlled. Drinking among the educated classes is becoming more common. Chewing of *pan* (betel leaves) and smoking are very common. Any *pan*-cigarette seller of the town makes a decent living. The high prices of tobacco have not been any deterrent. *Hukkah* smoking is going out. Smoking is not confined to men alone.

Communal Life

Purnea villages do not have much of a communal life. There is no *Bhagawat Ghar* or a *Chandisthan* as a matter of course in Purnea villages unlike what one sees in Orissa or in West Bengal. There are also hardly any village library where people could collect. The want of any leisure time institution of a prominently binding character has had its impact. Very occasional *kathas* or *Satyanarayan Puja* has not been able to give a proper communal life to the villagers. The leisure hours are spent either at the house or in gossips with selected smaller groups of friends. A healthy feeling of community or next-doorness is wanting.

The type of village structure before the abolition of *zamindari* was introduced has been on the decline. At the top there was the village *zamindar*, if there was one. Then there came a miscellaneous group of gentry, mostly of the upper castes and then came the cultivators, the agricultural labourers with or without land. The so-called lower castes or the Harijans formed the lowest tier. In between these tiers there were the school *Gurus*, the village artisans, etc., fitten in. Casteism in some shape or other played the dominant role in the original village structure. The steel frame of the structure was an economic existence and there was not much of a cultural bend.

But if there was not much of communal life in that structure there was an accepted outlook of life to which generations had got adjusted.

In the present picture the great house of the *zamindars* has disappeared Most of the *zamindars* after the abolition of *zamindari* left the villages or if they are still in the villages they have taken to *mahajani* (money-lending business) or running a

Fair Price Shop or a coal or a cement depot more to keep up their prestige and hold on the villagers than to earn a living. The village *Guru* is still there but he has now become almost a politician and he is also out to catch the leadership of the village, if possible but is often handicapped by poorer economic incidence. The agriculturists have not yet adjusted themselves to the new set-up of administration although they realise that *begari* (free labour) or *kamiauti* (bonded labour) has been abolished. Somehow the little vestige of communal life if it existed at all has now disappeared. This is the reason why the Community Development Projects have taken up the social education programme and a scheme of opening village libraries, night schools, social centres, etc. A communal life has to be produced in the villages.

Not to speak of a communal life in the villages, there is even a liquidation of the family. Description of a family may be given under three heads: the kinship ties, the relationship between the members of the family and the prevailing standards of discipline. A socio-economic survey of some of the villages gives the impression that while basically the old family structure remains as the nuclear family of father, mother and children, there have been cracks. The kinship ties, the relationship between the members of the family and the prevailing standard of discipline have had a great shock and are undergoing fundamental changes. Rarely one will find the old type joint family system which offers a cushion to the lesser earning members. Not even one per cent of the people who go out of villages for earning a livelihood go back to the villages for settling down after retirement even if they have improved their houses. The old type of *pater familias* at the village home is a picture of the past. The tempo of urbanisation and the shift of a percentage of the rural population to the towns have led to the dissolution of the kinship ties. The rapid multiplication of population has far overstepped the availability of employment in the villages The abolition of *zamindari*, a somewhat spread of a spirit of lawlessness, non-availability of domestic servants and labourers, want of white-collared jobs in the villages and various other reasons have driven away a small but a very important percentage of rural population to the urban areas.

But if there is not much of a communal life in the villages one new feature that has emerged is that the old type sense of isolation has now been liquidated. Previously there was a sort of a concealed rivalry between a village and a village, particularly due to the feuds of the higher caste men. Geographically close, the villages remained somewhat apart. There has been a rapid spread of roadways and railways, development of means of

communications like cycles, passenger buses and carrier trucks. The sense of isolation has considerably been liquidated by them. Even Palasi, a rather inaccessible village in the interior of Purnea district with only one *pucca* building in the village (*thana* building) and 95 per cent of the villagers as agriculturists showed a somewhat want of this isolation. The only means of conveyance to Palasi is a bicycle or a bullock-cart and the road communication is cut off during rainy season when only river communication is available. Even Community Development Block office for Palasi has been functioning from Araria. It was found that although the people have not yet become town-minded the sense of isolation was broken. The previous dress of *lungis* and small *dhotis* is on the decline. The Koch women of the village are also changing their indigenous dress slowly. Now *dhoti, kurta, pajama*, shirt, *sari*, blouse are in use. Some modern agricultural methods have percolated in this rather inaccessible village in Purnea district. Manures like compost, super-phosphate, green manures are now being used. The villagers are quite progressive in their outlook in spite of the inaccessibility of the village. The original kinship ties are definitely on the decline.

When the kinship ties are being broken the relations between the members of the family in the wider sense will naturally be breaking. This was found at Palasi, the village referred to. Even in the smaller family unit of husband and wife, and children, the relations are changing. Patriarchal dominance is being replaced slowly by an egalitarian companionship between man and wife, and definitely the position of the wife is changing. It was found in this village that the children are not pulled up if they are found committing small thefts like stealing someone's toys or sugarcanes or vegetables from another man's field. If a child is put to the village school or to the school in the neighbourhood, the average father thinks his duty was over. The average village mother is far too busy to look after the child.

Purnea has not got many pilgrim centres excepting religious baths at Karhagola *ghat*. The want of pilgrim centres has been partially made up by the *melas* referred to elsewhere. Regarding communal dances, festivities, public games there has been a separate coverage. In other chapters the position of the economic and professional groups and classes in relation to social life has been covered.

HOME LIFE.

Purnea is essentially an agricultural district. As such home life of the district had undergone hardly any fundamental change

since the publication of the last *District Gazeteer* But the joint family system which has been the characteristic feature of the agricultural economy of Bihar has had a crack. A large joint family is hardly seen now. The family in the towns tends to be mostly consisting of husband and wife and their children. In the villages there are still remnants of joint family system but the previous authority of the *paterfamilias* is liquidating itself

In absence of a proper detailed survey it is difficult to give the size of each household family The last Census Table of 1951 had described the household size figures of the district based on a sample survey as follows "Household includes all the persons living together in the same house and having common mess In the sample survey one household in every 25 was taken as a sample The samples were selected from National Registers of citizens The first sample was obtained by dividing the number of households in each village or town-ward by 25 and adding one to the remainder Every 25th household thereafter was taken as sample."*

The figure of household composition was as follows :—

SAMPLE HOUSEHOLDS

District	Total population			Total number of sample households
	Persons	Males	Females.	
1	2	3	4	5
District	2,525,231	1,319,262	1,205,969	625
Rural .	2,430,352	1,261,540	1,168,812	600
Urban .. .	94,879	57,722	37,157	25

Sample household population			Size of households	
			Small. 3 members or less.	
Persons.	Males	Females	Number.	Persons
6	7	8	9	10
2,539	1,331	1,208	295	692
2,447	1,281	1,166	283	669
92	50	42	12	23

**District Census Handbook, Purnea*, 1951 p 92

From the above statement it will appear that the size of a rural family consists of about four members and of urban family even less than four members. The number of the size of households having three or less than three members in the district is also considerable. The shift to the urban areas, impact of western education, the modern economic trends along with other factors had led to the break-up of the joint family system. The educated people of the villages seldom intend to remain in their ancestral home.

DWELLINGS.

Regarding houses the last *District Gazetteer* had mentioned as follows : "The houses of the people may be divided into five distinct kinds, each tenanted by a certain class of the population. The lowest class, the *banihars* or day-labourers, build their houses with a bamboo frame-work, walled in with mats made of reeds, and thatched with *ulu* grass. Such houses consist of a single room, measuring from 10 feet to 12 feet in length, and from 6 feet to 8 feet wide, having a pent roof called a *do-chhapra*. The latter is of two kinds, viz., *lakhai* when the ridges are straight, and *bhaunrdar* (from *bhaunr,* a curve) when they are slightly curved. They have no windows, and the only means of entrance is a doorway closed by a loose mat formed of grass, secured with strips of bamboo. The walls are plastered on the inside with clay. A house of this description costs from Rs. 8 to 10.

"The houses built by the *grihashts* or petty cultivators are a little better and more commodious. They are from 15 to 18 feet long, and from 9 to 10 feet broad, the uprights of the roof being made of *sal* or *sakhwa* (*Shorea robusta*). The walls are constructed of strips of bamboo plastered over with clay. The house is usually surrounded by a yard called *angan,* having huts on the four sides, the intervening space between them being confined by walls formed of the same materials. The female members of the family reside in this area, to which strangers are denied admission. Outside its limits is constructed a second hut, called a *gohali* or cow-shed, the walls of which are unplastered. Close by the *gohali* another building is made, which is known as the *baitakkhana* and here visitors are received. It consists merely of a roof supported either by *sal* or bamboo posts, the sides being left entirely open, and having no walls or doors.

"Cultivators of the better class, called *malguzars,* have several houses of the *do-chhapra* kind, within an enclosure, entirely set aside for their wives or female relatives. The house

occupied by the male members of the family is called *chauari* or *bangla,* and is square-built cottage. The roof is formed of *chhapars* of a triangular shape, the base of each resting on a side wall, and the upper angles being joined together at the top. In this kind of house there is a *takhtaposh,* or wooden platform, covered over either with mats or blankets: and a few *khatias* or bedsteads, rough frame-works supporting a coarse netting. Other huts and *do-chhapras* are built as out-offices and for the accommodation of cattle. The *dhawa* is another kind of cottage, inhabited by the better class of tenantry. It is built of mud walls, having a ceiling formed of clay spread on bamboo mats supported on *sal* wood uprights. It is chiefly intended for the protection of property in case of fire and is used as a store house

"*Mustajirs* and *patnidars*, and other small landholders, build *chauaris* for the accommodation of their females The fence surrounding the family enclosure is usually made of bamboo matting plastered over with clay, but the few who can afford to do so build brick walls A short distance from this *haveli* or women's house, another *chauari* of larger dimensions, with from four to five doors, is erected Its clay plastered walls are often white washed with lime. Here the master of the house has his office, and spends most of his time. The *takhtaposh,* in houses of this description, is covered with a *satranji* or carpet, over which a white or figured cotton sheet is often spread A few chairs are also kept in it for the reception of guests of position. Out-houses of the same kind as *do-chhapras*, but on a smaller scale, are built as store-houses, and for the use of servants and cattle. Wooden doors are not, as a rule, found in *chauaris* The cost of these buildings varies according to their size, and the materials of which they are constructed. If *sal* beams and posts are used, and the walls are made of bamboo matting and clay, the cost ranges between Rs. 150 and Rs. 250; but if the walls are of brick and mud, the expense is as high as Rs. 500 or Rs. 600

"Larger landed proprietors or *zamindars*, who are not numerous in the district of Purnea, live in masonry houses called *deorhis,* built in a style common in the east, but on a small scale. The *zanana,* a square-built, flat-roofed house, is enclosed with high brick walls. In front of it, another large oblong building is constructed, in which are the business apartments. The floor is covered with a *farsh,* which is usually a *satranji* or carpet, covered with a white sheet Large bolsters are placed on this sheet for the convenience of visitors who recline on them, the proprietors occupying a cushion called a *kalin* or *bakiya.* It has become the fashion to fit up the best room of the house in the European style with sofas, arm-chairs, mirrors, and pictures."

O'Malley's observations regarding housing of the people of Purnea five decades back have now substantially undergone a change particularly in the urban areas. It is true that in the villages the main materials for building a house still remain to be bamboos or reeds of jute and thatching grass particularly for the people of lower income-group. But houses of brick and mortar or even occasionally a modern reinforced concrete or reinforced brick houses are also seen. The influence of European planters is still seen in bungalow type of houses in the villages with some compound belonging to the people of higher income-group. In the towns modern type buildings of brick and cement are becoming common. About three decades back Forbesganj town had only corrugated sheet roofed houses excepting *pucca* houses belonging to the family of the *zamindars*, Mr. Forbes. Forbesganj has now got a large number of modern type houses. The use of cement and iron rods has become common and the old type beams and rafters of timber or iron joists are not in much use now The richer people are usually building double storeyed houses with verandahs overlooking the roads. They are using iron fabrications liberally. There are more *pucca* houses in Forbesganj, Katihar and Kishanganj than what are found in Purnea. Peculiarly enough Purnea, the district headquarters still continues to be a town of long distances and wide maidans interspersed with living areas. There are not many modern type *pucca* houses in Purnea and most of those that exist belong to Government.

The use of electricity has definitely made a lot of changes although consumption of electricity is still confined to the upper income group people. Very few villages have been electrified so far.

The urban areas in Purnea district have ample facilities for expansion. Recently a large colony of houses in connection with the Kosi Project is being constructed in Purnea town opposite the Circuit House which was once the Collector's residence. The largest builder at present happens to be the State Government and Government buildings are going up in all the towns. The siting of the subdivisional headquarters at Katihar in the recent years has led to the construction of a large number of Government buildings. All the Block Development offices at various places in the interior of the district have naturally led to the construction of buildings for the Block offices and the residential quarters of the employees. There is no doubt that the siting of the Block Development offices will have a great impact on the housing question and at least the well-to-do people will now think of building *pucca* brick and cement houses instead of large bungalows of bamboos or reeds or thatched roofs.

It is often said as a piece of joke that in Purnea district a man starts with a *marai* which means just a thatched shed without much of housing accommodation. Then he converts the *marai* into a *khurau* or raises a thatched hut and ultimately when he acquires some money by his business or profession, he builds a *paccau* or a *pucca* house. This humorous observation is not far from truth.

There are not many old remarkable buildings in Purnea district. Some of the old bungalows of the planters with very large compound are still to be seen although they are almost on their last legs. These bungalows were very cool and had a very thick thatched roof which had to be changed almost every year. Some of the churches and the Najarganj palace in Purnea city are remnants of good buildings constructed decades back which have well stood the ravages of the great earthquake of 1934.

There has been no town and country planning in this district. The problem has not yet arisen as there is ample availability of land both in the rural and in the urban areas But the housing condition in the urban areas clearly shows that there has been a lop-sided development of the town with very little of planning. Katihar which is by far the most important town in Purnea district has the housing problem in its worst form. The *bazar* area is very insanitary, extremely congested and houses have grown up without any long-term or short-term planning. The urban sprawl shows not only a hastiness but also a certain amount of want of civic sense. The State Government have sponsored the scheme of giving house-building loans to lower income and middle income-group people so that they could build their own houses or have houses built for themselves. These colonies also have to be properly planned and executed.

An aspect of population growth which is not always appreciated is that the increase in number of families, each requiring a home, is not exactly the same as the increase in the total population. With the increase in number of families more units of accommodation will be needed and thus the demand on land for houses will be increased. In the urban areas the demand for houses has naturally grown more than the increase of population would at first suggest. As sufficient number of houses do not exist, houses have been split into flats without any separate modern conveniences. Even a very small house which would hardly accommodate a family of five persons in reasonable comfort is being used to accommodate two families or more. In Katihar it was investigated that an entire family consisting of five persons has been living in one single room in a house and sharing bathroom

and lavatories with the other inmates of the house who again were divided into two separate units. Three family units were found living in a house with barely three living rooms. It is the middle classes and the lower middle classes that have been hit the hardest by this housing problem. The housing problem of the industrial workers has been discussed separately. The labouring classes are not as badly off as the middle and lower middle classes so far as houses are concerned.

FURNITURE AND DECORATIONS.

Possession of furniture is an index of taste and economic status. In the villages basic furniture for the living rooms are possessed by only the well-to-do people. The average villager of poor means has no other furniture excepting a few mats, *daris* or some rough type of chairs and tables. Decorations are hardly to be seen in the rural areas even in the houses of well-to-do persons. Pictures or curios are rarely to be seen excepting in the case of some very selected families of culture, taste and good income.

In the urban areas possession of some furniture is quite common in the groups of high, middle and lower middle income-groups. Even in lower middle class families there will be one or two chairs, stools, cots and a table. Taste for inside decorations has not yet developed to any appreciable extent. Pot-gardening is hardly to be noticed. Gardening and arboriculture are confined to a very few households and institutions either in the village or in the urban areas. The railway colony in Katihar shows a better appreciation in this respect.

COOKING UTENSILS.

Cooking utensils are the same as in other parts of Bihar. It is noticeable that heavy brass and copper cooking utensils are slowly being substituted by aluminium cooking utensils. Stainless steel utensils are the latest in well-to-do families. In place of heavy brass and copper utensils usually given in marriage gifts now we find stainless steel or aluminium utensils are being presented.

FESTIVALS.

Festivals form an important feature in home life. The Hindus and Muslims observe a large number of festivals which are much looked for by them. People generally spend a lot on the festivals and even loans have to be borrowed. The importance of festivals in the social life of the people is well recognised. The women generally attach much more importance to festivals and they have, as a matter of fact, kept up the traditions and the ceremonies in connection. The Hindu women celebrate *Tij, Jitiya, Chhath* and

Bhatridwitiya, etc. with great religious fervour. The important festivals of Hindus are *Durga Puja, Dipawali, Basant Panchami, Sivàratri, Holi, Ram Nawami* and *Janmastami*.

The important festivals of the Muhammadan are *Muharram, Sabe-barat, Ramjan, Id, Bakrid* and *Fatiha-duaz-dahum*. The Adibasis celebrate their festivals .with great eclat. *Sarhul* and *Karma* are their main festivals. But they have now adopted most of the Hindu festivals.

Ornaments.

The ladies of Purnea have a craze to invest their savings in ornaments. Gold and silver ornaments are commonly in use. Brass and stone ornaments are now rare. The ornaments which are now in use are *bali*, small earring, *Jhumka*, a pendant earring, *bala*, bracelet *kangan*, necklace, *kanthmala*, a close fitting necklet and anklets. Rings are the common ornaments of both males and females. Gold chain is also used by both the sexs. Silver ornaments and like *bazubands* for arms, *lahri* or a fivefold chain hanging over the breast *goraon*, *karas* or anklets are now becoming out of fashion. Bronze, copper ornaments have disappeared. Ladies now prefer light ornaments. Widows do not generally use ornaments.

Food.

Rice is the staple food of the district. The rich and the middle class men also take *puris* and vegetables, rice and pulses. *Puris* are made of flour mixed with water forming unleavened bread, which is kneaded into very thin cakes and fried in *ghee* or clarified butter. Wheaten flour and *kalai* pulse, mixed together and prepared like *puris*, called *kachawris* are much prized. Maize which is grown extensively in the western part of the district is also one of the principal food of the middle class and lower class people. The poorer section of the people take *sattu* (ground gram or barley) throughout the year as the midday meal. *Chura* and *murhi* with curd is taken as breakfast.

Milk and its various preparations are taken occasionally as their prices are getting high. A few decades before milk, curd and sweetmeats of various kinds were available in plenty. Now the position has changed. With the decrease in pasture lands, milk is now not found in abundance. Milk and *ghee* are now taken by a few rich. The yield of the average milch-cow is less than half a seer. Powdered milk has got into the market and is used largely by the sweetmeat makers.

Because of a large Muslim population meat is available every day in the towns. Meat and its various preparations are served in

the restaurants and hotels in the towns of Purnea district. Besides meat, fish and eggs are also available in such eating houses. Fish which was cheap in Purnea before has now become costly and beyond the reach of the common man. A lot of spices and chillies are usually taken.

Tea has become a common beverage. Tea stalls are found even in the interior of the district. In the towns of Purnea, road-side tea stalls and hotels have increased considerably. In these hotels cheap meal and snacks are served. *Sharbat* or *Lassi* or cold drink is in demand during the summer season. *Pan* chewing and smoking are common. *Pan* is, however, more expensive than in most of the other districts of North Bihar.

On the whole the diet of the common man is deficient in protein. The poorer people have to take maize, *urid*, *Kulthi*, potato and sweet potato. Green vegetables are not grown in abundance and the common man seldom eats vegetables excepting *sag* (spinach). Fruits are not taken widely. Even mango is denied to the common man.

AMUSEMENTS

The various *melas* and fairs which are held almost throughout the year are the principal source of entertainments. *Melas* are much looked for by the people. Cinemas, theatres, circus and other sources of amusements have great attraction.

Football has a great fascination to the people both in the town and the villages. Cinema has become very popular. The rural people visit the *melas* in thousands to see the cinema shows. Theatre parties also occasionally visit the district. Radio is also one of the sources of amusements, especially in the towns. Dramas are also staged occasionally. At the *Kala Bhawan* at Purnea dramas are occasionally staged. *Mushaira*, and *Kavi Sammelan* where poets congregate and recite their verses are rare but popular. The Adibasis have their own sources of amusements in songs and dances. Wrestling was widely patronised two or three decades before by Banaili Raj, Najarganj Raj, etc. Wrestling bouts are getting rarer.

The subject of medical and professional groups and classes in relation to social life, e.g., impact of the abolition of the *zamindari* system on social life has been treated elsewhere.

CHAPTER IV.

AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION

LAND RECLAMATION AND UTILISATION

The Bihar Wastelands (Reclamation, Cultivation and Improvement) Act, 1946, was passed for reclamation of culturable waste land The Act has been enforced in Purnea from 1947 The Wasteland Reclamation Officer who is under the control of the District Magistrate controls the department at the district level. He is also under the control of the Director of Wasteland Reclamation, Bihar, whose headquarters is at Patna The section is under the Revenue Department The main aims and objects of the department are to bring culturable waste land under cultivation to increase production. Loans are distributed under Land Improvement Loan and Agriculturists Loan for reclamation of waste land

The total area of culturable waste land in this district according to 1951 Census was 346,118 acres * The progress of reclamation of waste land from 1948-49 to 1959-60 as supplied by the District Development Officer, Purnea is given below. It may, however, be mentioned that these figures differ from the figures published in Table 31 (page 46) of the *Bihar Statistical Handbook*, 1955 for the year 1955-56

Statement showing the L. I. Loan allotted and advanced and area reclaimed (waste land) since the year 1948-49 to 1959-60

Year.	L. I. Loan allotted.	L. I. Loan advanced	Area reclaimed.				
			By L. I. Loan	By settlement under W. L. R. Act	By tractors purchased through Government loan	By private persons without loan	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Rs.	Rs.	A. D.	A. D.	A. D.	A. D.	A. D.
1948-49	25,000	13,000	147 00	..	..		147 00
1949-50	2,00,000	1,49,994	2,330 66	..	..	..	2,330 66
1950-51	2,00,000	1,59,997	1,480 14	..	..	..	1,480 14

District Census Handbook, Purnea (1951), p. 161.

important as Sir Antony MacDonnel thought them to be.* The Final Report of the Survey and Settlement Operations for Purnea district (1901-08) mentions the net cropped area to be 1,824,368 acres [vide Appendix XI (*ii*)]. Out of this area 44.3 per cent was under *aghani* crops, 35.2 per cent under *bhadai* crops and 20.5 per cent under *rabi* crops. The percentage to net cropped area of total area under food crops and non-food crops was as follows :—

Rice, 73.4; wheat 3.9; barley, 1.2; *marua*, .7; *makai* 2.3; gram, 1.1; pulses, etc. 13.8 and other food crops, 2.5 (page 102 of the Settlement Report).

Percentage to net cropped area of the areas under oil seeds are as follows :—

19.8; sugar, .4; indigo, 1.1; tobacco, 1.2; fibres, 7.1 and others .05 (page 103 of the Settlement Report)".

The above analysis of Mr. Byrne in the Settlement Report may be compared with the classification of land in 1951 as given in the *District Census Handbook, Purnea* (1956) as follow**:—

Total area in acres (Geographical area including surveyed).	Net area sown.	Area sown more than once.	Current fallows.	Area under orchard.	Cultivable waste.	Not available for cultivation.
3,198,400	1,628,967	575,475	592,127	32,915	316,118	603,273

The area cropped more than once is also an index of land utilisation. The double cropped area mentioned in the *Survey and Settlement Report* (1901—1908) was 528,461 acres or 28.96 per cent of the district area. The area sown more than once in 1951 Census was 575,475 acres. The double cropped area had thus increased by 47,014 acres. The percentage of twice cropped area is important. In some localities where the lands are very good, an *aghani* rice crop and a *bhadai* jute crop can be had from the same land. Such type of lands are locally called *dhanpatua* land.

**Purnea Survey and Settlement Report* (1901-08), pp. 100-101.

**P. 161, *District Census Handbook, Purnea*, 1951, published in 1956.

The details of classification of land mentioned in the *Bihar Statistical Handbook,* 1955 published by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics for 1955-56 were as follows :—

(In thousand acres.)

Forest.	Not available for cultivation.	Other uncultivated land excluding current fallow.	Current fallow.	Net area sown.	Total area of the district	Bhadai crops
40	452	292	650	1,522	3,120	789

Aghani crops.	Rabi crops.	Fruits.	Potatoes.	Vegetable including root crops	Total area sown.	Area sown more than once.
9·02	400	21	17	13	2,142	643

The slight decrease in net area sown reported in 1951 and 1955-56 against the steady increase in population and waste land reclamation sponsored by the State Government seems to be peculiar. The figures given in the *District Census Handbook, Purnea,* 1951, and the *Bihar Statistical Handbook,* 1955 have to be appreciated with certain amount of caution. The reporting of crop statistics is much more difficult and complex task and the agency appears rather weak and ill-informed. The figures of crop statistics based on sample survey basis or what is now known as eye estimate cannot but be defective. It may be mentioned in this connection that the area under forest in 1953-54 was shown as 20,000 acres, 19,000 in 1954-55 and 40,000 acres in 1955-56 according to the *Bihar Statistical Handbook,* 1955. These figures are intriguing and the high figure in 1955-56 does not appear to be correct. There is no natural forest now in Purnea. The last patch of jungle was the Bhauah jungle of Darbhanga Raj which has now been cut down and reclaimed. It is true that Purnea district about a century before had large forests and an abundance of wild life. Some of the old *shikar* books describe Purnea as affording the best *shikar* land for wild games.

Afforestation.

The section land utilisation also includes afforestation. Measures have been taken to bring marginal waste land under

afforestation. Purnea district had once extensive monsoon and prairie forests. The areas on the north-east bordering Nepal *Tarai* had dense deciduous forests. The principal trees were *sal*, teak, *sisham*, *palas*, *peepul and* semal. The forests of Purnea had completely disappeared as more and more lands fell to the plough. The last patch to fall to the axe was the Bh uoh Jungle of Raj Darbhanga about two decades back. The details have been given separately. Afforestation schemes in Purnea date back from 1951 when the North Bihar Afforestation Division was created with headquarters at Muzaffarpur. The jurisdiction of the division originally extended over the whole of North Bihar with a view to afforest all barren lands. Subsequently in 1958 the headquarters of the divisions shifted to Purnea and was renamed as the Purnea Afforestation . Division. So long the headquarters were at Muzaffarpur the afforestation work was solely extended over two districts, viz . Champaran and Purnea, but now with the change of the headquarters at Purnea the afforestation work of this Forest Division is now confined to Purnea district The total area so far afforestated is 2,205 acres and falls mostly in the Arana subdivision and a small patch in the Sadar subdivision There is a proposal to extend the afforestation scheme in the Kishanganj subdivision bordering Nepal where waste land fit for afforestation is found in abundance. The small patch of forest is still in existence in the Kishanganj subdivision which does not exceed about 400 to 500 acres. The main species growing there are *sal* (*Shorea robusta*), *jamun* (*Eugenia jambolona*), *semal* (*Bombax melabaricum*), *asan* (*Terminelia tomentosa*), *Khair* (*Acacia catechu*) and *kans* grass (*Saccharum spontaneum*), the last one is found all over the district.

The species planted are mostly *semal*, *sisham* and bamboos which are reported to be indigenous and suited to the soil The other species, viz.. teak, *kaju* and casurina had also been planted. Specieswise break up figures from 1956 to 1959 of the area afforestated were as follows*:–

Year.	Kaju.	Semal	Sis o.	Casurina	Sal	Bambo	Other species.
	A. D.	A. D	A D	A D.	A D	A D.	A. D.
1956	189 25	256 50	99 00	7 00	1 00	Nil	7 , 25
1957	334 00	8 , 50	0 50	37 00	Nil	3 00	10 , 00
1958	18 , 00	102 00	Nil	3 00	Nil	Nil	Nil.
1959	386 00	67 00	44 00	Nil	9 0	205 00	Nil.
Total	114 25	511 00	131 50	47 00	10 00	208 00	180 25
						Grand total.	2,205 00

*The Statement was supplied by the D. F. O., Purnea.

Afforestation work so far extended in Araria subdivision is going on in 13 places and in Sadar subdivision in one place. The break-up figures were as follows :—

Subdivisionwise break up of afforestation in acres up to August, 1960.*

Purnea Sadar Subdivision.	A. D.	Araria subdivision.	A. D.
Singhiya	422 00	Aurahi	340 00
		Simraha	208 00
		Rahikpur	220 00
		Murballa	61 00
		Bara	210 00
		Saifganj	70 00
		Hasanpur	32 00
		Hariya	80 00
		Barbana	18 00
		Azamnagar	150 00
		Haria	456 00
		Arrah Madargunj	150 00
		Kusiargaon	200 00
	422 00		2178 00

Total —2,600 acres.

IRRIGATION.

Purnea is one of the districts which due to various factors did in the past without much of artificial irrigational facilities. The need of a systematic irrigation had not been felt before because ordinarily the rainfall was ample and the soil in most parts retained moisture well, and the large number of rivers, rivulets and marshes assured facility of water. This characteristic of Purnea district had been observed by Francis Buchanan as early as 1810. Regarding earlier arrangements for irrigation Francis Buchanan had observed :—

"The spring rice is watered by the rude machine called Jangat which I described in the account of Dinajpur, and gardens are watered by the lever called

*The statement was supplied by the D. F. O., Purnea.

here Dab, constructed on the same principle with the Pacota or *Yatam* of Madras, but infinitely more rude and less powerful. No other kind of artificial watering is used. It appears to me very practicable, in seasons where the rains were scanty or failed, to effect much good by throwing dams across the smaller rivers which come from Morang, and spreading their water over the fields by means of canals. In ordinary years even, this might be applied to great purpose in rearing winter crops of high value such as cotton, which would then be in a great measure independent of season. A work of such extent, however, could only be raised by the *zamindars*, and those of this district must acquire habits very different from what they now follow before any such laudable exertions could be reasonably proposed"*.

Buchanan, however, had not overlooked the importance of irrigation. He had suggested the construction of dams across the smaller rivers with their origin in Nepal and spreading the water over the fields by means of canals.

In the *Final Report of Survey and Settlement Operations of Purnea* (1901-1908) J. Byrne had observed that the irrigated area was only 1.5 per cent of the net cropped area and was practically negligible. He had mentioned :—

"There is no attempt at and little need for systematic irrigation. A temporary well is excavated in every plot that grows tobacco. It costs very little to make, as water is usually found at a depth of 10 or 12 feet even in cold season, except in Dhamdaha *thana* where the subsoil is too sandy to retain moisture long. If not lined with earthenware rings these wells do not last longer than the next rainy season. The total number of earthen, i.e., temporary wells is returned as 24,701. This is probably below the mark. There are grounds for believing that in certain areas at least, only the ring wells were noted, the unlined wells being omitted. The matter is not of importance in this district."**.

*Francis Buchanan's *An Account of District of Purnea*, in 1809-10, p. 411 (published in 1928).

***Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the District of Purnea* (1901—1908), published in 1908.

Due to the sandy soil ordinary tanks will not be much of a success as a source of irrigation.

O'Malley was of the same opinion. He had mentioned--

> "Irrigation is little practised and little needed. The rainfall is ordinarily ample, and it begins early. There are usually storms from March onwards: rain falls in April and May, which is of great service to jute and indigo; and the monsoon is well established in June. The soil also in most parts retains moisture well, and there are numerous rivers and marshes, no less than 5 per cent of the total area being under water. Besides this, the rivers usually rise early in May owing to the melting of the Himalayan snows. and the dry channels also carry down turbid water from the hills. These floods are often disastrous. so that Purnea has more to fear from inundation than from deficient rainfall"*.

The physiography of Purnea district explains how there has been a low acreage under irrigation. The district lies towards the eastern extremity of the Ganga plain and has Ganga on the south and the Nepal hills on the north. The district has most of the features of a submontane alluvial tract. In the east the soil is loamy and fertile. The east has a large number of marshes which seldom run absolutely dry and they are intersected by numerous rivers and water channels. The western part was a sandy grass country intersected by old channels of the Kosi river. The Kosi river with her number of channels had always spilled over in the rainy season and had laid a thick deposit of coarse sand during the annual inundations. The deposit of sand prevented cultivation. In the recent years the different types of thick grass had been cut down and roads had been run and the great multipurpose Kosi Project had been taken up. Rapid changes are going on in this area and the great Araria plains with sand dunes with a very small quantity of top soil and sand underneath are expected to be converted into cultivated areas once the Kosi canals are completed and the water of the canal is taken out for irrigation. Generally speaking, the level of the country is diversified by old river beds and other depressions which have encouraged the cultivation of jute and paddy. As elsewhere the prospects of crops depend mainly on the gamble of rains. If there is sufficient rainfall at the beginning and during the *Hatia*, it is expected that there will be good crops. The indigenous

**District Gazetteer of Purnea* by L. S. S. O'Malley (page 83).

irrigational contraptions, viz., *rahat, latha, mota,* etc., will not be suitable for the sandy soil of Purnea. Purnea is a district where essentially deep canals will be necessary as a fruitful source of irrigation. What is generally understood by the minor and medium irrigation schemes have not done much good to Purnea although quite a number of them have been implemented since 1944-45.

The economic history of Purnea shows that the district has had severe famines and scarcities in 1770, 1783, 1788, 1791, 1866, 1874, and 1892. In the 20th century there have been famines and scarcities quite often. The bad years in this respect are 1906, 1908, 1909, 1930, 1932, 1940, 1952 and 1957. Failure of rains has been the main cause for such famines and scarcities.

The Bihār Statistical Hand Book of 1951-55 published by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics does not mention the area of irrigated acreage in Purnea district. ' This is rather surprising and we have to fall back on the mention of 26,777 acres as irrigated in the *Final Report of Survey and Settlement Operations* in 1901-1908. According to the *District Census Hand Book,* 1951, the irrigated area in 1921 was 26,777 acres which increased by only one acre in 1931. In 1941 the irrigated area was 26,760 acres while in 1951 it had declined to 25,070 acres. This statistics, if accepted would rather indicate that the sponsoring of the minor and medium irrigation schemes had not done much benefit to the district. The irrigated acreage has not gone up since the last Settlement Operations.

Data supplied by the Collectorate office regarding attempts to extend irrigation from 1956-57 to 1959-60 are as follows.—

The details of irrigational schemes from 1956-57 to 1959-60 were as follows :—

—	1956-57.	1957-58.	1958-59.	1959-60.
1. Medium Irrigation Scheme ..	1	2	2	1
2. Minor Irrigation Scheme ..	14	..	..	4
3. Surface Percolation Wells ..	30	16	9	16
4. Tube-wells ..	2	1	3	5
5. Open boring with strainer ..	27	54	63	73
6. *Rahat* Pumps .	1	2	3	1
7. Low Lift Pumps ..	..	18	27	33
8. Bihar Hand Pumps	..	..	24	105

Kosi Canal.

Construction of a canal under the Kosi Project is an important step for irrigation in Purnea and Saharsa districts of the Bhagalpur Division. The 27 miles long main eastern Kosi Canal takes off above the barrage at Bhimnagar. Excavation work of the canal was taken up in 1957. The work is still under progress. After the construction of the main canal and its branches, the canal is expected to irrigate 13.79 lakh acres of land in the districts of Purnea and Saharsa. The main canal will feed the four branch canals, viz., Murliganj Branch, Jankinagar Branch, Banmankhi Branch and Araria Branch; except first which is in Saharsa district the other three branches fall in Purnea district.

Kosi Project is of vital importance to Purnea district and has been discussed separately.

The following are some of the features of the eastern Kosi canal system :—

(a) *Length of Canal.*—Main canal—26 miles; Murliganj Branch canal—44 miles; Jankinagar Branch canal—63 miles; Banmankhi Branch Canal—68 miles; Araria Branch canal—41 miles and Distributaries—880 miles; total being—1,122 miles.

(b) *Annual Irrigation.*—The expected irrigation once the canals are completed will cover 7.19 lakh acres (*Aghani paddy*); 1.44 lakh acres (*Bhadai* paddy), 2.40 lakh acres (Jute); 2.16 lakh acres (Rabi); 0.36 lakh acres (Sugarcane) and 0.24 lakh acres (Vegetable). This total expected acreage of extra irrigated lands are both in Purnea and Saharsa districts.

The three branch canals (Jankinagar, Banmankhi and Araria Branch canals) with a total extent of 172 miles exclusively fall in Purnea district. It is understood that out of 13.79 lakh acres about nine lakh acres of land will be in Purnea district. The entire earthwork involved in the excavation of the canal system is about 72.17 crore cubic feet.

Excavation work was taken up in April, 1957 and out of 72.17 crore cubic feet of earthwork 19.56 crore cubic feet was done by 1958 in the eastern Kosi main canal and in the Murliganj and Jankinagar branch canals. For speedy execution of the canal the services of the prisoners have been utilised. In this connection it may be mentioned that such type of work used to

be taken from the prisoners in the past which is evident from the old records. The volunteers of the Bharat Sevak Samaj had also given their services for the partial execution of the work. The irrigation system is expected to come into operation by 1962-63.*

Protected Bunds.— In order to protect the crops and villages from inundations, embankments are necessary. Some of the embankments of Purnea are quite old. Regarding embankments the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911) mentions as follows:—

> "*Embankments.*—On the west in the Bhagalpur district there is a long embankment known as the Bir Bandh, which appears to have been constructed some centuries ago as a protection work, though its actual purpose is disputed. In the north of this district there are some small protective embankments, with a total length of 1½ miles, erected by the District Board in 1889-90 to prevent the eastward trend of Kosi in its upper reaches towards Anchra Ghat. Further south, on the east bank of the Damdaha Kosi, there is a private embankment, called the Sirsi Bandh, erected by the Sirsi Factory and the Gondwara concern to protect the land under indigo cultivation. Large training works of a modern type have also been erected by the Bengal and North-Western Railway at the point where the Kosi enters the Ganges

> "The question of building extensive embankments to control the river and prevent its swinging back to the east was considered some years ago. The local authorities, the planters, and the railway officials, severally and in combination carried out surveys and examined plans, and the river was explored up to where its channel is defined and unalterable in Nepal. A scheme was proposed for controlling it, and the whole subject was considered in 1896-97 at a conference in Calcutta, presided over by the Secretary to the Government of India in the Public Works Department. The result was that the scheme proposed was pronounced to be of doubtful efficacy, while its cost was enormous. It was concluded that no steps are feasible for controlling the course of this tremendous river with its

*The statement has been supplied from the Kosi Project Department.

numerous channels and their wide and elevated beds, beyond protecting by short lengths of embankments isolated tracts exposed to its floods.

"*The railway embankment.*—The most important embankment in the district is that of the Bengal and North-Western Railway, which runs along the south of the district parallel to the Ganges from Kursela to Katihar, and thence through Bhagalpur and Monghyr. It forms an effective barrier against the Ganges floods, but on the other hand doubts have been raised as to the sufficiency of the waterway provided, and as to whether high floods from the north are thereby prevented from getting away to the Ganges as rapidly as they might otherwise do. It is true that much of the land adjoining it is uncultivated, but fears are expressed that there is danger of lands going out of cultivation owing to permanent water-logging, and of lands at present cultivable but uncultivated being rendered entirely unfit for cultivation On this point Captain F. C. Hirst remarks:—'I believe that this embankment contains, from Mansi to Katihar, a direct distance of about 60 miles, an average waterway per mile of about 75 feet. If we cut out the waterway allowed for important streams (Chota Kosi, Boro, Barandi and Kosi)—and these can be eliminated, since they are not exits for Ganges water spilling to the north—we find that only just over 3 feet of waterway per mile remain for carrying Ganges spill through the embankment. In other words, the Ganges is not building at all north of the embankment.'*

"*Belwa embankments.*—The only embankments in the district maintained by Government are the Belwa embankments, built at Belwa 2 miles south of Basantpur (the headquarters of the Araria subdivision) to restrain the river Panar from encroaching westwards. They protect an area of 14,162 acres, and are composed of the following works, with an aggregate length of 14,574 feet or 3 miles 365 feet :—(1) an embankment (3,135 feet) along the Panar; (2) a retired embankment (5,225 feet); (3) an embankment (1,431 feet) joining these

*F. C. Hirst, The Kosi River, J. A. S. B., September, 1908.

two embankments; (4) an embankment (1,640 feet) across the Panar Dhar near Mirzabagh; (5) a retired embankment (1,018 feet) at Belwa; and (6) a road (2,125 feet) leading to the embankments. There are also four short spur embankments, with an aggregate length of 1,631 feet along the new channel of the river Panar near the civil station of Araria, which were designed to protect it from the encroachment of that river. These embankments are maintained by the Public Works Department, which incurs all expenditure in the first instance. The cost of maintenance is then apportioned among the *zamindars* whose estates are benefited and is recovered from them.

"*Other embankments.*—There is a small embankment close to Purnea town, which was erected to protect it from inundation, and there are also some *zamindari bandhs* near Araria.* Another old embankment, called the Mamu Bhagina Ail, enters the district from Nekmard in Dinajpur, and runs across country near the south of the *Pargana* Suryapur in the Kishanganj subdivision It was probably originally a line of earthworks intended as a defence against the hill tribes, and not an embankment to protect the country from inundation."

SOIL.

The soil is alluvial; in the area watered by the Kosi it is sandy, and that in the area watered by the Mahananda is loamy. The contour on the whole is extremely flat with undulations noticeable mostly in old river beds. The Kosi area lying on the west is mostly sandy. This is the tract through which the main Kosi had flown and had deposited sand from year to year. This sandy tract is locally known as the "Araria sandy waste" which stretches from a little beyond Purnea railway station to Forbesganj. The width of the belt is about 5 to 6 miles. In the last 30 years sand-dunes have been formed in this stretch for the want of wind-breakers and any attempt to grow legumes or areca or other suitable vegetation is to add to the top soil.

Different types of soil are found and have got their local names. A clay soil known as *karari* is found in the south-east. Another name given to a soil in which clay predominates is *matiar*. Loamy soil is called *doas* or *mansimati;* and a sandy soil is *baluar* or simply *balu*. In a considerable area the soil is generally so poor that the fields are left fallow for a few years to

regain fertility. It is reported that the introduction of *Chandipat* has brought a good part of sandy lands under cultivation.

The line of demarcation between sandy and clayey soil in this district is thin. Accumulation of rain or flood water over a considerable part of the district makes the land fit for jute and paddy cultivation. In the clayey lands also *rabi* crops are not popular due to want of winter rainfall and the early start of rainfall from April which makes threshing of *rabi* crops difficult. Some *rabi* crops are, however, grown in the areas lying along the Ganga.

The Agricultural Chemist of the Sabour Agricultural College after chemical examination of the soil had come to the following conclusions. The soil of the Kishanganj and Araria subdivisions as a whole comes under an acidic zone. Presence of acid is appreciably harmful to all other crops except paddy and jute. Referring to the fertility of the soil in general, in most parts of the district nitrogen and phosphate, though found in considerable quantities are not present in the form in which it should be available to plants. On an experiment it was found that although paddy and jute could grow, none of the *rabi* crops could thrive well*.

PRINCIPAL CROPS.

In the land utilisation section we have discussed the classification of lands and have seen that the principal food crop of the district is paddy. The following table will show the acreage of the principal crops during 1953-54 to 1955-56**.

[In thousands of acres.]

Wheat.	Gram.	Barley.	Maize.	Masoor.	Arhar.	Khesari.	Peas.	Sugarcane	Tobacco.	Potatoes.	Jute.	Chillies.	[illegible]
87	45	65	138	12	10	49	7	2	10	13	247	3	1
137	59	88	120	10	7	37	.	1	12	15	201	6	1
118	44	71	139	10	5	42	6	3	10	11	302	4	..

Rice.

Rice is the important crop of Purnea. About 77.6 per cent of the net cropped area during 1955-56 was under paddy. *Aghani* or winter rice is usually cultivated on low land, although some

*The experiment was made in Islampur area on the Ganga-Darjeeling Road which is now in West Bengal. (P. C. R. C.).

**Vide *Bihar Statistical Handbook*, 1955, pp. 34—36.

species are grown on comparatively high soils. During the early months of the spring, every opportunity is taken to prepare land which does not bear a second crop by repeated ploughings. In May, when there is usually a good shower of rain, a nursery-ground, called *bichraid*, is ploughed four times, and the seed scattered thickly over it. When the seedlings make their appearance, another field is prepared for transplanting. By this time the rainy season has set in, and the field is dammed up by means of low ridges, so as to retain the water. It is then repeatedly ploughed until the water penetrates the soil, and the whole is reduced to a thick mud. After this, the young seedling is then taken from the nursery and transplanted in rows about 9 inches apart. *Aghani* paddy is also sown broadcast, but this is less productive. If there are early showers in April and May sufficient to enable the nursery beds to be prepared thoroughly, nearly all the sowings of the year are subsequently transplanted. But if, as often happens, there is no rain until the regular rains begin in the middle of June, the area of broadcast rice is increased, and beds of seedlings are found only near rivers, tanks, and other sources of irrigation Rice which is sown broadcast is called *lathahan*, and this manner of sowing is styled *baogi* to distinguish it from *ropa* or transplanting. Harvesting takes place in November and at the beginning of December, except in years in which the rains extend far into October, when the ripening of the grain is proportionately delayed No less than seventy different varieties of *Aghani* rice are reported for this district.

Bhadai rice is generally sown on high ground. The field is ploughed 10 or 12 times after the first showers of spring, and the seed is sown broadcast in April or May. As soon as the young plants are six inches high, the land is harrowed for the purpose of thinning the crop and clearing it of weeds. The crop is harvested in August or September, as it ripens, and is usually followed by a winter crop of pulse, oil-seeds and wheat. Some late varieties admit of pulse being sown amongst them when nearly ripe. Land yielding *bhadai* rice also often produces a crop of china in the spring, before the rice is sown. Thirty-two varieties of this rice have been reported.

Boro or *bora* rice is grown on rather low lands, such as the shelving banks of rivers and marshes. It is sown in November and reaped in May.

Harvest.—Paddy is reaped by cutting off the ears (*sish*), with about a foot and a half of the stalk attached. It is then tied up in sheaves or bundles (*bojha*), and carried to the threshing floor (*khamar*), which is usually prepared by merely cutting off the

surface turf. A pole or bamboo (called *menha*) is driven into the ground in the centre of the cleared area, round which the sheaves are placed, and a number of cattle are then brought up, tied neck to neck to the pole. These are driven round and round and they tread on the grain, separating it from the stalk and the ear. The stalk left (*lerua* or *poal*) which after the grain has been threshed out is called *daoni,* is carefully stacked for the use of cattle when pasturage is scarce. The grain is now collected in a heap on the threshing ground, and the process of winnowing (*osauni*) is proceeded with. This is effected by lifting a quantity in a basket and gradually letting it fall to the earth while a moderate wind is blowing. The grain falls on the ground, while stray straws, dust and chaff being lighter, are blown away to a distance. Thus the rice is fit to be stored.

Store-houses are called *thek, bakhari* or *badari* if they are small and round, and *munahar* if they are large square granaries. They are merely thatched raisings from the ground on blocks of wood or bamboos, on which the flooring, also of bamboo, rests. The inside of the repositories is covered with a coating of fine clay, mixed with cow-dung, as otherwise the grains would be liable to suffer from damp. The grain is deposited and taken out, as occasion may require, though there are aperture just large enough to allow the ingress and egress of one person.

Paddy or unhusked rice is shelled and converted into rice (*chaul*) in two ways, called *ushna* and *arwa.* In the *ushna* method, the grain is par boiled in water until the shells of the paddy split. It is then taken off the fire, permitted to cool, well dried in the sun, and pounded in a mortar (*ukhli*), if a small quantity is being prepared, or by a paddy-pounder (*dhenki*), if the quantity is large. The husk is next separated from the grains by means of a winnowing sieve, and the rice is fit for use. For *arwa,* the rice is merely pounded without being boiled, and, after being cleaned from the husked chaff, is fit for use. This type has a distinctive taste and is much prized. A common food *khai* is obtained from unhusked rice by parching it in a pan on heated sand. By this process the grain bursts and makes the parched rice swell. This is also called *lawa.* A sweet preparation Murki is made by mixing the *khai* with boiling *jagri,* or brown sugar, and then drying it in the open air for an hour or two. In making *muri,* the unhusked rice is steeped in water for 12 hours, and then taken out and boiled. This process is repeated, after which the rice is dried in the sun and is ready for husking. The cleaned rice is next fried in an earthen pan, and when half cooked, is taken out and thrown into hot sand and well stirred

with a stick for short time. The sand is strained off through a sieve, after which the *muri* is fit for use. *Chura* is made by boiling unhusked rice and then frying it for a few minutes in a pan; it is then taken out and put in a *dhenki* or mortar, and pounded till it is quite flat. The best kind of *chura* is made of half-ripe rice. *chaulbhaja*, as the name implies, is mere rice parched in an earthen pan with a little salt. It is a cheap article of food.

Maize.—Indian corn or maize (*makai*) forms an important article of food among the poor. It is eaten half ripe by roasting the cobs and cakes are also made from the flour obtained by grinding. Maize is largely grown in the western parts of the district. It thrives in *balsundari* (sandy loam) soil. The acreage under maize in 1956-57 accounts for about .90 per cent of the net cropped area.

Wheat.—Wheat is largely cultivated in the west and south-west of the district in *thanas* Damdaha and Korha. It requires a clayey soil of medium elevation and is of two varieties, one a white kind called *dudhi*, the other a small red-grained kind called *jameli*. A new variety called 40 number is also becoming popular.

Other cereals.—Barley and oats are cultivated chiefly for local consumption. *Sattu* flour is prepared from parched barley, as well as from other grains, and is largely consumed by all classes during summer. There is a popular festival held in honour of *sattu* called *satuani* (usually on 14th April).

There are several kinds of millet grown. *Janera* is the large millet (*Sorghum Vulgare*), of which there are two varieties, a red kind called *raka* and a white variety called *larkalia*. A coarse flour is prepared from the seeds and is made into cakes largely consumed by the poorer classes. Among small millets mention may be made of *kauni* (*Setaria Italica*), *China* (*Panicum miliaceum*), *sama* (*P. Crusgalli*), *marua* (*Eleusine Coracana*) and kodo (*Paspolum scrobiculatum*). *Kauni* and *sama* are husked and eaten, forming a poor substitute for rice. *Marua* is pounded into flour, and cakes are prepared from it. *China* is parched into *marha*, a light food used by the poor.

Pulses.—Gram is the most important pulse crop. Other pulses grown in the district are (i) *kurthi* (*Dolichos biflorus*), (2) *kalai* (*Phaseolus radiatus*), (3) *rahar* (*Cajanus indicus*), (4) *meth* (*Phaseolus accenitifolius*), (5) *khesari* (*Lathyrus sativas*), (6) *mung* (*Phaseolus Mungo*), (7) *masuri* (*Cicer Lens*), and (8) *bora* (*Vigua Catiang*).

Non-food crops.—Oil-seeds predominate among the non-food crops. The chief crops of this character are rape seed locally called *tori*, mustard (*rainchi*), and *til*, sesamum of commerce. The castor oil plant, locally known as *andi* is also grown on sandy soil in the south.

Fibres.—Besides jute which has been discussed in a separate chapter, the other fibres are *munj* grass, the Deccan hemp (*Hibiscus caunabonis*) called *chauna*, and *san* hemp (*cretolaria juncea*) known locally as *gorsan*. *Chauna* is cultivated together with jute and the fibres are sold as *patua*. *San* hemp requires a high-lying soil of alluvial deposit and is raised extensively along the river Panar. It yields a fine fibre suitable for making ropes and fish nets.

Tobacco.—As early as the year 1789*, the Collector reported that the quantity of tobacco annually produced in Purnea district was, according to the most probable conjecture, not less than 50,000 maunds of which 30,000 were exported to Murshidabad and Calcutta. The subject of cultivation seems to have received considerable attention at that time, as in the following year experiments were made with foreign seed received from Calcutta. The chief localities in which tobacco is cultivated are the high sandy ridges which are frequent between the old bed of the Kosi and Panar, and between the Kankai and Mahananda, including the eastern portion of the Araria and the western portion of the Kishanganj subdivisions. The best tobacco is grown in the villages of Dauria, Malharia, Kalabalua, Jalalgarh Damar, Kuthaili, and Bishampur in *Parganas* Havali Sultanpur, Sripur and Asja, which lie along the high strip of country extending from the town of Purnea northward and somewhat westward to Matiari and Nawabganj. The variety of tobacco cultivated in Purnea is that known as *vilayati* (*Nicotiana rustica*), which has completely superseded the *deshi* variety (*Nicotiana tabacum*).

The cultivation of tobacco commences in the month of August or early in September, with the sowing of the seed in raised and carefully prepared seed-beds. The seedlings sprout in from fifteen to twenty days, after which they are allowed to go on growing till five or six leaves are formed, when they are ready for transplanting. During this period the plant is very delicate, and is usually killed by heavy rain or strong wind. To protect it, the cultivator usually has mats and straw ready to place over the plant on the appearance of unfavourable weather. As soon as the seed has been sown, the cultivator commences to prepare the

*Statistical Account of Bengal, Vol. XV, published in 1877, p. 290.

regular tobacco field by repeated ploughings, harrowings and weedings. Manure also, and ashes are liberally applied, wherever they are obtainable. About the first week of October these preparations are complete and the transplantation begins. The seedlings are set in rows a foot apart and at about the same distance from each other in each row. After transplantation, the land has to be kept free of weeds, and the soil loose. For this a small rake or hand hoe is used. As soon as the plant has taken six to ten leaves, it is necessary to nip off the top of the central shoot and thus prevent the formation of other leaves. Towards the end of January, or the beginning of February, the plants mature and the leaves which turn yellow are cut off by means of a hooked prunning knife. After being cut, the plants are left in the fields for four days or so, and are then carried to a grassy plot, where they are spread out in the sun to dry, being gathered into small heaps at night. After a month or so the plants are taken home and the leaves are separated from the stems and tied into "hands" of six or seven leaves each.

The next process is that of sweating or fermentation; usually a number of bamboos are spread on the floor of the house, some straw is placed upon them to keep off the damp, and the tobacco is piled up in heaps of 10 or 15 maunds over the straw The temperature rises as fermentation proceeds, and the degree of heat is felt by the hand. When the proper temperature is reached, the heap is broken up and re-arranged to prevent over-heating, this process being repeated two or three times at intervals of 5 to 10 days.

There is hardly any rotation of crops and tobacco is grown on the same land year after year. It is said that the longer the field is under tobacco, the better the outturn would be and the quality would improve. Manure in the form of cow-dung is, however, liberally applied; and apart from this, the best homestead lands, on which cattle are tied during the remainder of the year, are generally selected for tobacco cultivation. As soon as the crop is cut, the plot is weeded and again turned into a cattle pen till the next year's cultivation commences. The crop is liable to an insect pest (*pillu*). This is a black grub, about 2 inches long, which hides itself during the day in the ground and comes out at night, especially in cloudy weather, and bores into the stems. Whenever a plant suddenly begins to wither, the ryots look for the insect at the root of the plant and dig it out and kill it.

The area under tobacco cultivation seems to have diminished. In 1877 the area under the crop was estimated at

15,000 acres. In 1911 it was reported to be 24,000 acres*. From the *Bihar Statistical Hand Book* 1955 published by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics it appears that the area under tobacco cultivation ranges between 11,000 acres to 13,000 acres. Tobacco is now a Central excisable commodity and duty has to be paid. Tobacco crop is likely to be heavily damaged by untimely rain or frost. Extension of other crops has affected cultivation of tobacco. The love of jute money has also been responsible for the decline in tobacco acreage.

Indigo.—Indigo cultivation had since long disappeared from Purnea district. The invention of synthetic dye by the Germans in the first decade of the present century reduced indigo cultivation to be unprofitable. Its cultivation in the past had played an important role in the economic history of the district. A detailed account of Indigo has been given in a separate chapter.

Sugarcane.--Sugarcane is cultivated to a very small extent more or less, all over the district except in the south. Sugarcane has several varieties and the best is called *lalgari* which has a white bark and a soft juicy stem. Sugarcane is largely cultivated in the areas lying in the Barari area of the Katihar subdivision. A sugar factory at Semapur had closed down about three decades back The sugarcane of Purnea district is now sent to Hasanpur Sugar Factory in the Darbhanga district. Sugarcane is also crushed locally and from the juice *gur* is manufactured.

VEGETABLES.

Potato, the most important vegetable in the district had been in cultivation since long. As early as 1810 Francis Buchanan had mentioned that "the European potato near Puraniya, and also near Nathpur, has by the exertions of Mr Smith come into very general use, not as common but as a *tarkari.* In other parts it is totally neglected"**. The cultivation of potato does not seem to have made much headway during Hunter's time in 1877. He had mentioned "Potato, *alu* (*Solanum tuberosum*) cultivated in ....but having an average yield of 12 *mans* (nearly 9 Cwt.) per acre."†

The area under potato in 1911 as mentioned in the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* was 6,950 acres. From the *Bihar Statistical Handbook*, 1955 (Table 22) it appears that acreage

*District Gazetteer, Purnea (1911), p. 90.

***An Account of the District of Purnea* 1810 by Francis Buchanan, published by B. and O. Research Society Library, Patna (1928).

†Hunter's *Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol. XV, p. 287.

under potato is greater in Purnea district than the other districts of North Bihar. The total area covered by potato cultivation in Purnea in 1955-56 was 10,000 acres as against 8,000 in Saran, 8,000 in Champaran, 6,000 in Muzaffarpur, 7,000 in Darbhanga and 4,000 acres in Monghyr. The *balsundri* (sandy loamy) soil of Purnea is suitable for potato cultivation. Irrigational facilities would encourage extension and improve the yield.

Pumpkins (*Kadu*) are sown in October and June and gathered in the next April and October respectively, while red pumpkins (*kadima or konhra*) are cultivated in the rainy season only. Cucumbers (*khira*) grow almost throughout the year, and are generally gathered twice, from June to August and from October to November. Like other species of the cucurbitaceous order, they are grown on high clayey soil. Other common vegetables are the *tarbuj* or water melon, the cucumber called *kakri* when green and *phuti* when ripe, and the *karela* or bitter gourd. Among edible roots the following are cultivated :—

suthni, sweet potatoes (*sakarkand*) and *Misrikand*, which is considered a cooling food. The common arum called *kachu* is grown on high sandy soil and is of two varieties—one sown in May and cut in February, the other sown in July and reaped in the following May. *Mankachu* is cultivated on the same kind of land and is also an article of food. Other popular vegetables are brinjals, aniseed and coriander. Cabbages, carrots, turnips and tomatoes are commonly grown in the winter. Green bananas are commonly used as vegetable. After the resettlement of displaced persons, several unknown and good varieties of plantains have been introduced. Various kinds of spinachs grow in plenty in Purnea district.

Arboriculture.

Plantation of trees was considered as a religious duty by the Hindus. Francis Buchanan had mentioned as follows :—

"The native consider it as a religious duty to plant trees, and in this district the performance of this duty has produced as much inconvenience, as in Dinajpur has arisen from digging tanks. The plantations in general consists of large groves, placed at some distance from the houses, which are bare and without shelter. These groves produce the most execrable sour resinous fruit, filled with insects and were it allowed to be cut the timber is of very little

value; but as every man thinks himself bound to preserve the trees planted by his ancestors the trees were usually saved until they rot, or are blown down by accident, and as they decay, various other trees and bushes spring, and form a destructive thicket."*

The damp climate of Purnea and its proximity to the *Tarai* jungle had encouraged various species of trees. In the earlier years of the British Administration many European officers had taken particular interest in planting mahogany, *seris*, mango, *jamun*, *nim*, *pipul*, and other trees by the side of the roads. The Ganga-Darjeeling Road, at one time, had an excellent avenue, remnants of which can still be seen from Purnea to Kishanganj.

FRUITS.

Regarding fruits the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911) had mentioned as follows :—

"Mango trees are extensively grown in the district, the area of mango groves being altogether 22,582 acres. Large as this area appears, it is far less than in other districts of North Bihar, possibly because a large proportion of the population is Muhammadan. It is at least noticeable that most mango gardens are found in the west, where there is a predominance of Hindus, with whom the planting of mango groves is an act of religious merit. The fruit is far inferior to that of the Malda Mango, and the description of it given by Buchanan Hamilton still applies to the most common species, viz., "execrable, sour, resinous, fibrous and full of insects". Other fruit trees are of the same species as are usual in other parts of Bihar, such as the jack (*kanthal*), *bel* (*Aegle Marmelos*), *lichi* (*Nephelium litchi*), *tal* (*Borassus flabellifer*) and *khajur* (*Phoenix sylvestris*). The guava grows in abundance, and peaches are found in orchards. Among other fruits may be mentioned the plantain, lime, pineapple, *jam* (*Eugenia Jambolana*), *bair* (*Zizyphus Jujuba*), *saripha* or custard apple, *ata* or bull's heart and *gulab-jam* or rose-apple. Pomegranates (*anar*) of an inferior kind are grown, and also the *amra* or hog plum, which is not much eaten, though another variety called the *bilati amra* finds a ready sale. The fruit of the tamarind

**An Account of the District of Purnea* by Francis Buchanan in 1809-10, p. 307.

> (*imli*) is used only for cooking; and that of the papaya (*papita*) is not much priced. The betel-nut (*supari*), on the other hand; is common and highly appreciated. The *singhara* nut is also found in abundance."

From the *Bihar Statistical Hand-book*, published by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Government of Bihar it appears that the areas under orchards remained static or have not increased from the figure recovered in the Survey and Settlement Report of Purnea (1901—7908). The area under orchards was 21,000 acres in 1953-54, 24,000 acres in 1954-55, 21,000 acres in 1955-56 and 18,000 acres in 1956-57.

Quite a large number of varieties of mango, some peculiar to Purnea district are grown. Purnea had very large mango groves before, some of which have been cut down in the last two decades. Purnea town had several mango plantations covering large areas which have now fallen to the axe to accommodate urbanisation. Experts mention that the existing varieties have deteriorated. Apparently since Buchanan's time there was an encouragement of the cultivation of mango trees in the days of the planters and the *zamindars* but there had been a deterioration since.

It has to be mentioned that good variety pineapples grow in Purnea district and particularly in Kishanganj subdivision. About a decade back there used to be extensive plantation of pineapples near Purnea and Kishanganj towns. This fruit, however, has not much of local appeal and Siliguri pineapples captured the small demand of the district and led to a decline of pineapple cultivation.

With the advent of Bengali refugees since 1946 some of the palatable Eastern Bengal (East Pakistan) varieties of plantains have been introduced.

Agricultural Implements.

The indigenous agricultural implements are widely used for agricultural operations. Francis Buchanan who had visited the district in 1809-1810 left an account on the agricultural implements. The agricultural implements used during Hamilton Buchanan's time do not differ from the present impelments prevalent in the district. The wooden plough with iron-share (*hal*), ladder (*mayi*) and (*chauki*), bida or rake, reaping hook (*Kachiya*), the weeding iron (*pasan*), hoe (*kodali*), hatchet (*kurhali*), sickle which were used during Buchanan's time are still in operation. A large wooden pestle and mortar

(*Ukhali*) is an implement used for separating the husks from rice. The mortar or *dhenki,* the pestle of which is raised by a ....is used by the big cultivators. Regarding bullock-carts Buchanan had mentioned that although there are many carts they are never employed in agriculture either to carry out manure or to bring home to crop.*

All the indigenous agricultural implements of Francis Buchanan's time are still used for various agricultural operations. But so far as the bullock-carts are concerned the position had now changed as the bullock-carts are used for transport of manure and other agricultural operations.

Besides the indigenous implements the modern implements have been introduced but response from the cultivator is reported to be not fairly encouraging. In modern implements the Bihar Junior Plough, the Bihar Junior Ridger, the Bihar Senior Plough, Bihar Senior Ridger, Five-tined cultivator, Japanese weeder, Hand hoes, Jute seed Drills and Chaff cutters" have been introduced. The chaff cutters are becoming popular even among average middle class cultivators Tractors are used only by the big cultivators.

SEEDS.

The cultivators preserve a portion of good quality of their produce as seed Seed of good quality is also supplied by the Government. Seed multiplication scheme has been taken up by the Agriculture Department for multiplying better type of seeds but the resources for supply of good quality seeds are limited.

Three subdivisional farms of 50 acres each have been established at Araria, Katihar and Kishanganj to produce and multiply seeds of improved and recommended varieties of crops. All the 38 *anchals-cum*-blocks are to be ultimately covered by seed multiplication farms of 25 acres each. Sixteen such farms have been established till 1960. There is one district farm of approximately 100 acres situated four miles east of Purnea railway station.

MANURES AND FERTILIZERS.

The cultivators of Purnea were allergic to use even the indigenous farm-yard manures in the past as mentioned by Francis Buchanan :—

"This most valuable branch of agriculture is almost as totally neglected as in the eastern parts of Ronggopur. Cowdung is the most common fuel, nor is its

An Account of the District of Purnea in 1809-10 by Francis Buchanan p. 409-10 published in 1928 B. O. R. S.

quantity for manure ever augmented by litter. In most places, therefore, the greater part and in some places the whole of what can be collected is reserved for burning, and the usual manner of manuring the few fields where any such thing is attempted, is for two or three successive nights to gather a herd of cattle on a narrow space. This is continued in turns, until the whole field receives a scanty supply. Tobacco, kitchen, gardens, mulberry, and sugar-cane are generally allowed a little cowdung and ashes, but not in every place, and everywhere in so scanty a proportion as to produce very little good, Oilcake and fresh earth are given to betel-leaf, and the latter to mulberry. The ashes are given to the crops of grain that grow in winter but in some places are totally neglected."*

Cowdung is still burnt as fuel. This is a disastrous habit for it deprives the soil of a great source of fertility. But the apathy of the cultivators towards manure is slowly disappearing. Farmyard manures and green manures of the *moong* and *sanai* varieties are used in the western and eastern parts of the district respectively. The Department of Agriculture has started popularising *Dhaincha* as green manure but has not been able to make *Dhaincha* popular. Cultivators are also encouraged to make their own compost-pits outside the villages. People have started chemical manures sold through credit Agricole. The previous allergy to use them is disappearing.

The four Municipalities, viz., Purnea, Katihar, Forbesganj and Kishanganj have started preparation of town compost and sell the manure to cultivators within a radius of 10 miles of the Municipality. The Department of Agriculture had launched a scheme for utilisation of local manurial resources and for which one Compost Development Inspector has been posted in each block with a view to give training to farmers. But there has not been much progress.

AGRICULTURAL DISEASES AND PESTS.

There are various diseases and pests which cause considerable damage to agricultural crops. Some of the common diseases are :—

(*i*) *Aus* paddy rice— *Gundhi bug* or *Gundhi kira.*

(*ii*) Jute and Mesta—*Semi loper,* steam and root rot.

**An Account of the District of Purnea* in 1809-10 by Francis Buchanan, p. 411.

(*iii*) Winter paddy—*Rice Hispa* (*Bhabhuni*) and stem borer (*Dharchhedak kira*).

(*iv*) Maize—*Jhingoor.*

(*v*) *Rabi* crops—*Agrotis* (*Kajara piller*).

(*vi*) Potato—Blight (*Patta Galua*).

It is reported that the attack of *Gundhi bug* used to be very serious in past on *Aus* paddy rice and the cultivators erroneously ignored it, pretending the damage was due to the southern wind. But with the intensification on the Plant Protection Scheme launched by the Agriculture Department, the cultivators came to know that the drying of milk of paddy ears was due to an attack of rice *Gundhi bugs* which suck the milky juice. Various insecticides are now used for minor and major agricultural diseases and pests. Plant protection units of the Agriculture Department are functioning at Purnea, Katihar, Araria and Kishanganj and are stocked with various insecticides and fungicides.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND FISHERIES.

Livestock.

Livestock is very important in a district like Purnea with a predominant agricultural economy. Francis Buchanan had mentioned in 1810 that "there are few countries in India where the stock of Cattle of the Cow Kind is of more value. They are of the same species with those of Dinajpur, but in general are of a much superior breed. There are many small cattle for the plough, but the number of those fit for carrying loads or for going in a cart is much greater than towards the east, and a great many of such as draw the plough would there be considered as too valuable for that purpose, and would be reserved for carriage. The pasture and other means of subsistence which the natives afford them would appear to be still more inadequate to their support than what falls to the share of the cattle in Dinajpur, on which account their strength is not in proportion to their size; but the oxen of this country, when tolerably fed, become strong and supply the greater part of Bengal with cattle for carts, and with the better kind that are employed by big traders to carry loads. I had been led to expect that the fine cattle which are employed for draught in Bengal artillery were bred in this country; but I saw scarcity one such, and the people said that they have come from the west. The number of such must therefore

be at any rate trifling, although these cattle are usually said to come from Puraniya".*

Regarding cattle the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* had mentioned as follows :—

"Purnea has long been noted for its great herds of cattle. Walter Hamilton, for instance, in his *Description of Hindostan* (1820) wrote.—'Cattle are an important article of stock, and it is hence that Bengal is supplied with a great proportion of the carriage bullocks; but the fine cattle used in the artillery are not bred in this district, although usually termed Purner bullocks, being from further west. The herds of cattle and buffaloes are so numerous that all the resources of the country would be unequal to their support were it not for the adjacent wilds of the Morang'. At the present day, the cattle of Purnea are of an inferior breed, being small, thin and weedy. One cause of this, apart from want of care and selection in breeding, seems to be the practice of using cows as plough cattle, which has a bad effect on young stock. This practice is common in those parts of the district where Muhammadans predominate, and was only given up by the Rajbansis three years ago. Moreover, they are overworked and ill-cared for, especially by the Muhammadans in the east; they are not well-fed during the hot weather, and milk is got with difficulty. Good cart bullocks are imported from Chapra and Tirhut, the principal markets being the Khagra, Islampur and Madanpur fairs in this district and the Alawakhawa fair in Dinajpur. There are also smaller cattle markets at Ichamati, Phulberia (near Kasba), Chandardihi, Dharamganj, Phulberia (near Bibiganj) and Gandharbadanga. In the vast grass prairies on the banks of the Kosi and Ganges, fine buffaloes are bred in large numbers, the *arens* or long-horned variety, which are said to contain a strain of the wild buffalo, being more common in the south, and the *bhangris* or short-horns in the north. Sheep are bred by the Gareri shepherd caste round

*An Account of the District of Purnea in 1809-10 Francis Buchanan, published by B. O. R. S. in 1928, pp. 413-14.

Katihar and Saifganj, they are a long-tailed, short-horned variety said to have been imported originally from the hilly country south of Monghyr Goats are very numerous owing to the large proportion of Muhammadans in the population. Horses and ponies are extensively used for riding and as pack ponies, but the *ekka* pony of Tirhut is unknown, probably owing, in part at least, to the liability of most roads to inundation" *

The above observation is still good. The cattle now are of inferior breed and are generally small and of poor quality. The cattle are not well-fed. The milk yield per cow or buffalo is very poor. Cow is still used in plough by the poor Muhammadan cultivators.

Pasturage.

In the past Purnea had extensive pasturage where cattle were let loose to graze. Regarding pasturage the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea,* published in 1911 had mentioned as follow :—

"Pasturage grounds are of greater extent in Purnea than in any other tract of equal size in Bengal or Bihar One of the most marked physical characteristics of the district is the great grassy plains or *ramnas* that surround the headquarters station, and extend nearly to the northern and western boundary. These expanses of country are used during the rains as pasture grounds, and form valuable properties. To give an idea of their extent, the plateau from Purnea to Matiari, about 40 miles in length and 6 miles in breadth, is practically all grazing ground. During the cold and hot weather from the end of October to the middle of June, they are left as open commons, on which anyone's cattle may browse, the sandy soil producing very scanty vegetation at these seasons. With the first shower of the rains, however, the owners take a greater interest in their property. They set up a bamboo in each field, an operation known as *chheka dena* and *Jhandagar dena,* which is a sign that occupation has been resumed, and that all

**District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911) p. 94.

cattle found trespassing will be sent to the nearest pound. This is also usually to be regarded as a notification that the land is to let. The Goalas or cowherds soon come forward; and the demand increases as the floods rise along the *Kosi chars,* the Ganges *diaras,* and the low lands adjoining them. The lease usually runs to the following Hindu festival of Diwali in October, after which the pasture grounds revert to their old condition of common land. They then no longer afford sufficient sustenance for large herds, and the Goalas drive off their cattle to the *Tarai* of Nepal or to the low lands in *pargana* Dharampur and along the Ganges. Most of the two latter tracts are the property of the Maharaja of Darbhanga, forming what is known as the *Charri Mahal* or grazing estate. Formerly free grazing in this *mahal* was allowed to all the cattle owned by resident *ryots* except buffaloes; and in 1886, when an attempt was made to levy grazing fees for the cattle of other graziers, the local *ryots* made common cause with them, claiming that all cows, whether their own or not, should be allowed to graze free of charge as scared animals. At present, a fee of two to eight annas is charged. The Banaili Raj, however, takes no fee from its own tenants for grazing their cattle on waste lands.

"In the western *thanas* the cattle are fed not only on mike grass of the pasture lands, but also on *khesari*. This is sown broadcast as a catch crop, as soon as the *aghani* rice crop is cut, and also on the silt left behind by the receding floods. Herds of cows and buffaloes come across from Bhagalpur and are put to graze on the *khesari,* which springs up rapidly and has a luxuriant growth. The proprietors of the herds pay high prices for these grazing rights, sometimes, for instance, four to five rupees per acre; but the investment is a good one, for the yield of milk is much improved both in quality and quantity. Curds and *ghi* are prepared on the spot and sold, the *ghi* being often consigned to Calcutta. The owners of the lands make large profits from the grazing fees, which usually are higher than the annual rents they themselves pay, and in addition

to this, the soil is enriched by the manure of the herd."*

The expansion of cultivation had brought much of the previous pasture land under the plough. A good number of cattle migrate to the neighbouring Nepal *Tarai* for grazing during the summer months. The limited patches of lands on the riperian areas of the Kosi and Ganga which grow *Kans* and reed grass also serve as pasturage during the rainy season.

Area under Fodder Crops.

Fodder crops as such are seldom raised. The husk of *rabi* grains like gram, wheat or *khesari*, etc., and the straw of paddy, maize, etc., are usually used as cattle feed. Apart from this dry fodder, green maize plant, creepers of potatoes and sweet-potatoes, sugarcane leaves during the harvest season are given to the cattle

The Animal Husbandry Department has been trying to popularise green fodder like Napier grass, etc , and the use of silo pits. Very little success appears to have been achieved so far.

Sheep breeding.

There is a class of men known as *Gareris* who rear sheep of indifferent variety. There is no sheep breeding farm and not much demand for mutton. The wool is of poor quality.

Poultry farming.

The Muslims and various other caste-men in the village and in the towns rear chicken but there is hardly any improved method of keeping them.

The birds are housed in a dark corner, often covered up by bamboo baskets in the nights and hardly given proper feed.

In order to improve the local breed a Poultry Development Centre at Purnea was started during the First Five Year Plan. A small poultry farm is attached to the centre. Two Poultry Extension Centres, one at Katihar and the other at Azamnagar were started in 1956 and 1959 respectively. The staff attached to these centres are expected to visit villages and spread ideas of improved methods of poultry management, storage of eggs, rearing of chicks and incubation in village conditions, marketing of eggs and guarding against poultry epidemics. The centres supply improved variety of cocks, cockerels, hens and chicks.

*District Gazetteer of Purnea pp 94—96.

The following figures of poultry are given in census tables of 1945 and 1956 :—

FOWLS.

1945 Total.	1951.	Hens.	Cocks.	Chickens.	Total.
6,46,795	..	2,83,999	2,47,525	5,95,674	11,27,278

DUCKS.

Ducks.	Drakes.	Ducklings.	Total	Other.	Total poultry.
15,987	7,514	10,113	33,614		11,60,892

FOWLS.

1956.	Hens.	Cocks	Chickens	Total.
...	3,00,487	2 37,842	5,91,567	11,28,896

DUCKS

Ducks.	Drakes.	Ducklings.	Total	Other.	Total poultry.
9,458	4,171	4,814	18,443	90,611	12,3[illegible],950

Fisheries.

Fishery Development Scheme under a Fishery Inspector has recently been undertaken by the Agriculture Department. Efforts are being made for the collection of spawn and the distribution of fry. The demand for fry is increasing and a number of nursery tanks are in use. Purnea district was once noted for its fish wealth and offers excellent opportunity for a proper development of fisheries.

Cattle Breeding.

At certain places the State has provided sturdy bulls for natural services. Artificial Insemination Centres also have been opened at various points. During the first Five-Year Plan three artificial insemination centres were opened at Purnea, Katihar and Kishanganj and two more centres at Araria and Dhamdaha were opened in the Second Five-Year Plan with several sub-centres.

In order to upgrade the local breed of Red Purnea or Morung cattle, an experimental farm has recently been opened at Maranga. Here red Sindhi bulls are used for upgrading the local breed.

Goshala.

There are seven *goshalas* or *pinjrapoles* at Purnea, Katihar, Kishanganj, Malpur, Pothia, Sonaili and Forbesganj. Kishanganj and Forbesganj *Goshalas* have been undertaken under the *Goshala* Development Scheme. These two *Goshalas* have been provided with the *Hariana* cows and one *Hariana* bull and they have also purchased other cattle. The scheme has been undertaken to increase the milk yield in the towns and also to upgrade the breed.

Segregation of decrepit, useless and unproductive cattle, competing with the productive ones has not yet been taken up in the district. But efforts are being made to send such cattle to Nirmali Gosadan in Saharsa district. But the progress so far is not encouraging particularly, due to the unwillingness of the Hindus in parting with the old and useless cattle.

Dairy Farming.

There is only one dairy farm located in the Purnea District Jail. The produce of this farm is very limited and does not even touch the fringe of dairy problem for Purnea town. The production of milk, butter, etc., is still in the hands of the *Goalas* who follow indigenous and insanitary methods in drawing out milk and marketing it.

Cattle Fairs.

Six important annual cattle fairs at Sarsi, Gulabbagh, Chandradai, Dharamganj, Forbesganj and Khagra are held. Details of the fairs have been given separately.

Animal Diseases and Veterinary Hospitals.

The important animal diseases are rinderpest, haemorrhagic septicaemia, blackquarter, anthrax, surra and foot and mouth diseases. The incidence of rinderpest in the past used to be

serious and in 1946-47 it became serious and destroyed 583 cattle. The statistics of mortality of bovine population from 1945-46 to 1950-51 are given below :-

	Rinderpest.	Foot and mouth diseases.	Haemorrhagic septicaemia.	Other contagious diseases.	Total.
1945-46	243	..	47	..	290
1946-47	583	..	76	356	1,015
1947-48	241	..	35	..	276
1948-49	122	4	190	3	319
1949-50	203	12	264	42	521
1950-51	84	..	104	3	191

Such details are not available in the report of the Livestock Census of Bihar in 1956. The incidence of cattle mortality is, however, said to be on decrease due to the establishment of a good number of veterinary hospitals and dispensaries. Outbreaks are tackled more promptly with sera and vaccine. Mass inoculation is resorted to against such diseases for which specific medicine is available. The Rinderpest Eradication Scheme launched by the Government of India during the Second Five-Year Plan period controlled to some extent the spread of rinderpest. In cattle markets, cattle routes and roadside villages prophylactic vaccinations are resorted to by the mobile units and this is an annual feature in the areas which are ravaged by floods.

From the old *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911) it appears that there was only one veterinary dispensary in the district. Veterinary aid was the responsibility of the District Board. Before 1950 there were one veterinary hospital and seven dispensaries. Now there are nine Class I Veterinary Hospitals in the district and are located at Baisi, Barhakothi, Bhargama, Narpatganj, Kochadhaman, Azamnagar, Manihari, Kadwa and Pranpur. Besides them first aid veterinary centres have been opened at the places, viz., Baharhat, Banmankhi, Barari, Purnea (East), Jokihat, Bahadurganj, Barsoi, Powakhali, Forbesganj and Sikti. During the time of flood veterinary Aid Flood Relief Centres are opened to control the spread of cattle epidemics.

**Bihar Livestock Census Report*, 1951, pp. 80—82.

Livestock Statistics.

The First Livestock Census was taken in 1920 and since then it is taken quinquennially. The table below will show the total livestock population since 1920 Census :—

Census year.*	Total cattle.	Total buffaloes.	Sheep.	Goats	Pigs.	Horses and ponies.	Donkeys.	Total.
1920	14,54,224	2,05,418	21,343	2,54,307	..	..	..	..
1925	16,56,611	2,01,954	28,312	4,40,548		..	..	..
1930	16,21,180	2,21,418	28,758	3,70,255	..	..	..	..
1940	15,12,629	1,79,248	20,374	4,06,504	20,083	..	..	..
1945	12,98,055	1,84,062	11,392	3,19,014	14,258	..	..	18,26,781
1951	17,51,318	2,34,829	23,708	6,67,551	18,692	38,667	274	27,35,396
1956	13,89,429	2,14,364	15,510	6,46,630	19,452	2,758	246	23,13,384

The total livestock population before Re-organisation of the State in 1956 was 27,09,402 and after transferring some of the portions of the Kishanganj subdivision to West Bengal the total livestock population came to 23,13,284.†

FORESTRY.

As mentioned elsewhere Purnea was once full of forests and the abode of wild life. Now all the forests have gone and afforestation division with headquarters at Bettiah in Champaran district is working to give a few patches of forests. Attempt is being made to grow bamboos and *kaju* in different areas.

NATURAL CALAMITIES.

Famines and floods are the two main natural calamities. The historical background of the natural calamities from the early days of the British administration is given in the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911) and is worth mention. Regarding famine and scarcity it had mentioned as follows :—

Liability to Famine.

"Purnea appears to be less liable to famine than other parts of North Bihar, though it does not escape

*The Statistics from 1920 to 1951 were taken from *Bihar Livestock Census*, 1951.

†*Report on the Livestock Census of Bihar*, 1956, Appendix XXXIV.

periods of scarcity. This comparative immunity is due to several causes. In the first place, the crops of the district are not entirely dependent on the rainfall, for the overflow of its rivers supplies ample moisture to the soil. Another safeguard against famine is the fact that the rice crop is by no means the only support of the people, the area under cultivation being distributed between the three crops of the year, viz., *aghani*, *bhadoi* and *rabi*, in the proportion of 56, 34 and 39 per cent respectively. Though the proportion of the *bhadoi* and *rabi* crops is smaller than that of *aghani*, which is composed mainly of winter rice, the former includes the valuable jute crop and the latter a large crop of oil-seeds, which also brings the cultivators good profits. In the east winter rice predominates, but jute is also very largely grown. In the west wheat, oats and barley are extensively raised, and in the cold season there is a large area under pulses and oil-seeds. The level of the country again is diversified by old river beds and other depressions, which form catchment basins and may be relied on for a good crop even in years of drought. In years of heavy rain the crops of these low lands are damaged, but on the other hand the high lands bear a good crop, so that, whether there be too much rain or too little, some portions of the land bear produce. Finally, a considerable portion of the population do not depend entirely on agriculture, but find cattle breeding and dairy farming a profitable occupation.

The following is a brief account of the famines from which Purnea has suffered :—

"The great famine of 1770 was attended with frightful mortality in Purnea. As early as the 28th April, 1770 the *Faujdar*, Muhammad Ali Khan, reported that multitudes had already perished and continued to perish of hunger. Children were offered for sale, but there were no buyers. Mr. Ducarel, the English Supervisor, also reported that the miseries in the town of Purnea were not less shocking than in the rural tracts. Pestilence had to be guarded against by the removal of the dead bodies, upwards of 1,000 being buried in three days after his arrival in the town. He estimated that one-half

of the cultivators and payers of revenue would perish with hunger, whilst those able to purchase a subsistence would have to pay at least 500 per cent advance in the price of food. 'On the high and sandy soils', he added, 'more than half the *ryots* are dead'. That this was not an exaggerated account is apparent from the report of the President and Council submitted to the Directors of the East India Company on 9th May, 1770, in which they said: 'The famine, the mortality, the beggary, exceed all description, above one-third of the inhabitants have perished in the once plentiful province of Purneah'.

"A week later the Minister of State, Muḥammad Reza Khan, gave a vivid account of the condition of the country. 'How', he wrote, 'shall I describe the misery of the country from the excessive droughts, the dearness and scarcity of grain hitherto, but now a total failure ? The tanks and springs are dried up, and water grows daily more difficult to be procured Added to these calamities, frequent and dreadful fires have happened throughout the country, impoverished whole families, and destroyed thousands of lives. The small stores of grain which yet remained at Raja Gunge, Dewan Gunge, and other places within the districts of Dinagepore and Poorneah, have been consumed by fire. Before each day furnished accounts of the fate of thousands; but notwithstanding. some hopes were still left that during the months of April and May we should be blessed with rain, and the poor *ryots* able to till their ground; but to this hour not a drop has fallen'. In spite of this, he reported on the 2nd June that he had, by exerting his utmost abilities, collected the revenue of 1770, 'as closely as so dreadful a season would admit. The remainder cannot be collected without evident ruin to the *ryots*, desolation to the country. and a heavy loss in the ensuing year'.

"The state of affairs by the end of the year can be gathered from Mr. Ducarrel's account (dated 13th December 1770) of four *parganas* which he had personally visited. 'There having been little or no harvest, the people either perished or went elsewhere for

subsistence, and they (i.e. the lands) were really sunk in one year almost half their value, on which point I should not have been satisfied if I had not received every proof that the closest examination could give me. They are now really lying waste for want of inhabitants, particularly Hyvelee Poorneah, which contained more than 1,000 villages; and it is the deficiency which takes place here that renders the Poorneah revenue less this year than heretofore'. Further on he said : 'The Gunge, called Alumgunge, the principal receipts of which depended on the consumption of grain in the town, has declined greatly by reason of the considerable decrease of inhabitants during the last famine, a great part of the town having become a jungle and literally a refuge for wild beasts. In respect to the improvement of the country, I must, in answer, premise that, according to the attested accounts I have received from the *Pergunahs*, there have perished near two lacks (i.e., 2,00,000) of people in this district'. To this it may be added that on the 20th December 1770 a letter from Mr. Reed of Murshidabad states that 'in Dacca, Poorneah and Hooghly, collections are regularly kept up, and some of them paid in advance.'* It is a somewhat striking commentary on this, and also a sign of how long the effects of the famine lasted, that as late as 1788 it was reported that the lands in about one-fourth of the whole Dharampur *pargana* had been depopulated during the famine and that most of them continued out of cultivation down to that year. On the other hand in 1772 there was such an abundant rice crop that it was unsaleable and the revenue was far less than in 1770.

Subsequent periods of scarcity.

"Some periods of scarcity ensued at the close of the 18th century. On 23rd September 1783 Mr. W. Douglas, the Acting Chief of Purnea, reported 'The uncommon drought which has been experienced this season in most of the *parganas* in this district has occasioned almost a total failure of the rice crops; that article has consequently become remarkably dear. The

*Annals of Rural Bengal, pp. 24, 405, 407, 410, 411 and 417. H2.

common sort, which sold last year for 4 maunds the rupee, now sells from 1 maund to 1 maund 10 seers for the rupee. So great an increase in the price has thrown the poorer class of the inhabitants (whose sole dependence for subsistence is on that grain) into the utmost consternation. Many of them recollect with horror the melancholy effects of the dearth of 1769-70 and are fearful of experiencing like calamity this year. They have pointed to me in the strongest colours their apprehensions, and represented the uncommon distress they now labour under and the apparent probability of their suffering still greater hardships, unless some speedy and effectual steps are taken to prevent the exportation of rice out of this district. Finding upon particular inquiry that vast numbers of merchants resorted here from different parts of the country for the express purpose of purchasing rice, I have therefore thought it highly necessary, as well for the present case and relief of the poor as to avert the dreadful effects of a scarcity, to issue an order to the farmer prohibiting any further exportation of that article, suffering, however, such merchants to convey away whatever quantity they may have already loaded on their boats'.

"A further report on the state of affairs on 28th October, 1783 submitted by Mr. S. Heatly, the Chief of Purnea, throws light on the resources of Purnea as a great rice producing area. 'The districts of Raje Mahal, Boglepore and Mongheer', he wrote, 'draw their supplies immediately from Purnea and must at this alarming crisis look up to it for their subsistence: and I do conceive, if the exportation is extended no further, that Purnea might hold up her head and give support to the adjacent districts, but when the army contractors and others of all denominations are suffered to carry whatever quantity of grain out of the district they deem proper, I confess, gentlemen, I am alarmed for the situation of the poor inhabitants and expect they will be suddenly in danger of experiencing the melancholy scene of 1769'.

"There was again deficient rainfall in 1788: and in 1791 the rains set in a month earlier than usual and

failed prematurely. The result was that there were floods in May and a continued drought after the 15th August, but the failure was estimated at not more than one-fourth of the usual annual produce. It is noticeable, moreover, that the officials more frequently dreaded the effects of an excessive than of a deficient harvest. Thus, in 1786, it is stated that the revenue of *pargana* Badaur had fallen from Rs. 1,50,000 a year to Rs. 75,818 'solely from the too great abundance of rice'; and that, in the district generally, much land had fallen out of cultivation in consequence of the excessive production of previous years, and of the immense stores of rice in the country rendering grain crops so valueless as not to suffice to pay the rents of the lands producing them.

Famine of 1866.

"There is no mention of any failure, greater than ordinary short crops, till 1865. There was then a certain deficiency in the local produce, but nothing amounting to a general failure of the crops; and the scarcity of the following year was ascribed to a sudden and excessive increase in the price of all articles of food. The grain stock of the district had been reduced by the excessive drain upon it for provision of the troops, which were constantly passing to and from in consequence of the war with Bhutan during the two previous years. General exportation had, moreover, so far diminished supplies, that in October, 1865 the coarsest kind of rice was selling at 12 seers for the rupee, while the current price for the best rice was 9 seers, as against 22 seers in 1864, and 26 seers in 1863. As the fresh crop came in, an improvement took place, and distress was not again generally felt till the following April, when the price of coarse rice again rose to the above rate. About this time however, mango fruit, of which there was an extraordinarily large supply, became fit for consumption, and large classes of the people were almost entirely supported on this food for several weeks. Notwithstanding the unusual demand, it was so abundant that for a long time a hundred continued to be sold for a single pice.

"It appears that the *bhadoi* crop was in most parts of the district an unusually good one. The winter rice in the south was a little below the average, but in Kishanganj an eighth of the crop perished by drought, and in the extreme east, beyond the Mahananda, people were forced to live on *kachu* and other edible roots. In Dharampur the *aghani* crop, though sown very late in the year, turned out well, but the *bhadoi* was a failure. Here, however, the people had wheat and plenty of pulses to live on. No relief seems to have been required; and only Rs. 170 were spent on some petty road work in the town of Purnea. No deaths occurred, and very little severe distress was reported.

Famine of 1874

"The rainfall in 1873 was deficient in quantity, and also unfavourably distributed. Only half the usual quantity fell in June, when, as a rule, abundant moisture softens the ground for ploughing, and, though the fall in July was up to the average, it fell under it by 4 inches or 30 per cent in August. In September the rain ceased with a fall of 65 per cent less than the average in that month. The effect of this deficient and unseasonable rainfall on the *bhadoi* or autumn crop was to reduce it to one-half the average. The effect on the winter rice crop was even more disastrous, for it yielded only three-sixteenths or at the most one-fourth of the average. The failure of the latter crop was severest in the east of the district, in the lands usually flooded by the Mahanadi and Panar rivers. In the Amur Kasba and Kadwa *thanas* and in parts of the Purnea and Balarampur *thanas*—an area of about 1,200 square miles—not more than one-sixteenth of an average rice crop was harvested. In the Kishanganj *thana* and parts of the Purnea, Katihar and Gondwara *thanas* also, covering an area of about 1,200 square miles, only a fourth of the crop was saved. In the four northern *thanas* the yield was three-eighths of the average, and along the Kosi the crop was good.

"This diminution in the ordinary food-supply immediately influenced the markets, in which, by January 1874, the prices of all sorts of grain were double the

normal rates. The general level of prices thereafter was scarcely affected either by the harvesting of the *rabi* crop, which had a fair outturn, or by private importations of foodgrains, which seem never to have ceased; and tension continued with slight variations, now towards an easier, now towards a more rigid tone, until the *bhadoi* or autumn harvests restored confidence. Relief works were started in December, 1873 and continued till the end of September, 1874, the highest daily average attendance being in May, when it was 31,029 persons. Altogether, 3,828,420 persons were employed on relief works from first to last. Gratuitous relief was started at the end of February and continued till the 24th September, the highest number of persons relieved in this way being 36,180 in July.

Scarcity of 1892.

In 1892 relief operations had to be undertaken in the Kadwa and Amur *thanas,* the area affected being 265 square miles in the former and 285 square miles in the latter *thana.* Here distress was due to the failure of the winter rice of 1891 and of the *rabi* in 1891-92, and was aggravated by the fact that the stock of foodgrains had been much reduced by heavy sales in 1891. On account of high floods the year before, more *aghani* was sown than usual, but the rainfall was markedly deficient, A succession of droughts occurred from June to October, the rainfall in the Purnea subdivision being only 32.94 inches; and from November till the third week in March no rain fell. The result was a failure of the *aghani* rice, the outturn being only 2 annas, while the *rabi* crops yielded not more than 5 to 6 annas. From the end of January, 1892 to the end of March there was little work for labourers, and a number of fires broke out, which were ascribed to the *banihars* (labourers) setting the houses of the villagers on fire, in order that labour might be required to rebuild them. Relief works were started on the 27th of January 1892 and closed on the 28th May. The attendance was largest in March and the first half of April, when about 3,200 persons found employment on the works. The

distribution of gratuitous relief was commenced on the 30th January and was continued till the 17th June, the highest number of persons so relieved being 1,360 in the week ending the 9th April. Advances to the extent of Rs. 22,551 were also given to cultivators under the Agriculturists' Loans Act, and Rs. 140 were granted under the Land Improvement Act. This form of relief was not confined to the Kadwa and Amur *thanas* but was extended to parts of the Purnea and Korha *thanas* and to the Khas Mahal of Belwa Harinkhuri in the Katihar *thana*.

Scarcity of 1897.

"In 1897, when other parts of India suffered from the most terrible famine of the century, Purnea was scarcely affected, though rainfall was short and crops were deficient, the outturn of *aghani* being 8½ annas, of *bhadoi* 9 annas, and of *rabi* food-crop 12¾ annas—taking 16 annas as an average outturn. No relief works had to be started, but some gratuitous relief was given. It was found that the subscriptions locally collected, supplemented by a grant of Rs 2,000 from the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund, gave all the relief required. To show how little the district was affected, it may be mentioned that when the Collector, having received reports that in certain places coolies were starving for want of work, offered them work, the men stood out for 3½ annas a day, as they could get congenial work in the fields at fair wages besides an allowance of food.

Scarcity of 1906.

"There was some scarcity in 1906 due to high and long continued floods. Relief works were opened tentatively in the areas most affected, but not a single man could be found willing to accept work at famine rates. The demand for labour was great in other parts of the district and the average earnings were far higher than famine rates, even for unskilled labourers. About Rs. 22,000 were distributed in the form of agricultural loans, and gratuitous relief was also given from the Araria Cholera Fund (raised in the previous year), from the Ram-

Lal Mukherji Fund, an allotment being made by Government from it, and from a fund raised in Purnea for the purpose".*

*Later Scarcities.***

Facts about the later famines and scarcities are available in the annual Land Revenue Administration Reports. After the scarcity of 1906 general scarcity condition prevailed in 1908-09 due to failure of *Uttra* and *Hathia* rainfalls. Jute could not be steeped for want of water and winter rice also suffered. It appears that in 1930-31 *bhadoi* crops had suffered due to insufficient rainfall in the months of July and August and the *aghani* crops were damaged due to incessant rain in September. Owing to drought at the beginning and flood later. scarcity conditions prevailed in the district. The landless labourers were hard hit. Again after a brief interval of two years there had been failure of crops due to uneven rainfall and unfavourable weather in 1932-33. In 1940-41 the jute crops had suffered badly owing to insufficient and untimely rainfall. In 1951-52 there was widespread failure of crops due to failure of the *Hathia* rains.

Scarcity of 1957.

The scarcity of 1957 was much more intense than the other scarcities after 1906. There was heavy rainfall at the beginning of February, 1957 which practically damaged the *rabi* crops. Owing to failure of *rabi* crops scarcity conditions began to manifest in the southern and western parts of the district which grow *rabi* crops. The failure of maize in the same pockets aggravated the condition. Failure of the *Hathia* rains that followed caused widespread damage to jute and *aghani* paddy. The landless labourers, *bataidars* and the small cultivators were very hard hit. Widespread relief works had to be undertaken. For relief work the district was divided into 38 zones corresponding 38 *anchals* and a Gazetted Officer was placed in charge of each zone.to deal the situation effectively and promptly. A large number of fair price shops were opened throughout the district. Hard manual and light manual schemes were undertaken to provide relief to able-bodied men. Gratuitous relief was given to indigent people. A large number of *khadi* spinning centres were opened to give remunerative occupation to the people. Government advanced loans to agriculturists under the Agriculturists Loans Act, Land

District Gazetteer of Purnea (1911), pp. 97—103.

*Relevant portions of the text on Economic Trends may also be seen (P.C.R.C.).

Improvement Loans Act and the Natural Calamities Loans Act. Details of loans have been given separately.

In 1959 there was again a failure of *Hathia* rains bringing in drought condition. Fair price shops had to be opened for the distribution of foodgrains. The Government also introduced the Bihar Miller Rice Procurement (Levy) Order according to which mill owners and dealers were required to deliver 25 to 50 per cent of their production to Government.

All this will suggest that rains still continue to arbiter the agricultural economy of this district.

Flood.

Regarding floods the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911) mentions as follows :—

> "Purnea is very liable to floods caused by the overflow of the Ganges and its tributaries. Not all the floods, however, are injurious, for in years of flood it is common for the high lands to yield well, and a good *rabi* crop often makes up for the loss of rice destroyed by inundation. The Mahananda, moreover, deposits a rich alluvial silt, on which fertile crops are raised after the subsidence of the water. The case is different with the Kosi, which spreads a layer of infertile sand over the land. The most serious inundation of recent years was that of 1906, when both the Kosi and Ganges were in high flood at the same time, and the Mahananda also rose high".

Floods of the Kosi.

"The river Kosi is especially notorious for the extent of its floods. This river has a catchment area of about 23 992 square miles and, in this respect, it is the third largest of the Himalayan rivers, ranking second only to the Indus and Brahmaputra. It debouches from the hills at a point only 100 miles north of its junction with the Ganges, and during this portion of its course the enormous volume of water poured in from Nepal has to be carried off by its bed or rather beds, for it has many channels. The latter are not sufficiently wide for the purpose, and the fall is comparatively slight. The result is that in time of flood the river spills far and wide submerging a large area in the Raniganj and Damdaha *thanas* for two or three months each year. In the extreme south it has to provide an outlet not only for the water brought down from Nepal and Purnea, but also for the drainage

of North Bhagalpur and North Monghyr. The waters of the Tiljuga and Baghmati from North Bhagalpur join the Gogri, which flows south-east from North Monghyr; and all three rivers join the Kosi a short distance above the Kosi bridge on the Bengal and North-Western Railway, between Kursela and Katarea stations. The outlet is too narrow for the combined rivers, and in the rains the surrounding country is inundated. Within recent times the denudation of the forest area to the north is said to have increased the intensity of the floods in Purnea. Thirty years ago the country between Patthardewa on the frontier and the jungle belt was well wooded. It is now a bare cultivated plain, which offers no resistance to the passage of floods"

It is gathered that in the past flood was an usual feature in Raniganj and Dhamdaha *thanas* and other parts of the district falling under the Kosi belt. Since the receding of the Kosi about seven decades before, the ravages of Kosi in Purnea district had subsided.

From *Land Revenue Administration Reports* it appears that jute crop in the Kishanganj subdivision was damaged badly in 1909-10 and 1917-18 due to the overflow of the Mahananda and its tributaries. In 1929-30 flood was caused due to excessive rains in August and in the next year 1930-31 due to incessant heavy downpour in September *aghani* crops affected too much. The overflow in the river Kosi caused widespread damage in 1931-32. After the great Bihar Earthquake of 1934 it appears that flood become almost an annual feature in the district. In 1934-35, 1937-38 and in 1938-39 the standing crop had suffered badly due to floods in the river Kosi; jute and sugarcane damaged badly. The flood in Ganga in 1948-49 had submerged a vast areas of lands. Manihari and Barari *thanas* had suffered heavily.

There was a serious flood in 1953 due to an overflow of practically all the principal rivers in North Bihar. Enormous damage was done to the existing roads and embankments, standing crops and dwelling houses. Luckily Purnea district escaped lightly in comparison to the flood havoc in some other districts of North Bihar.

The river Ganga had spilled at several places and the private embankment between Karhagola and Bhawanipur was over-topped. The river had inundated between the private bundh and Karhagola-Azampur embankment. The Ganga-Darjeeling Road was spilled over and standing crops were damaged. The

**District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911), pp. 103-104.

diara area between Kursela and Karhagola *ghat* had become one vast sheet of water and heavy damage was caused to *bhadoi* crops.

The villages to the south of Karhagola-Saharia-Azampur-Sanhar embankment, the villages to the west of G. D. Road, north of the river and south of N. E. Railway were badly affected.

The Kosi did not affect much as in years before. This was due to the fact that the river has now changed its course and now runs mainly through Saharsa and Darbhanga districts The Kosi falls into Ganga river between Kursela and Karhagola. A simultaneous rise in Kosi river along with Ganga would have caused a havoc.

The rivers Mahananda, Donk, Ramjan, Kari Kosi, Saura and Parman had moderate flood and remained within their banks. No important place or communication was affected by any of them.

Flood of 1956.

Due to incessant rains in June, 1956, there were heavy floods in almost all the rivers of Purnea. It lasted from 17th June to 26th June. There was another rise in the Kankai, Mechi, Mahananda and Donk in July, 1956. During the third week of August due to heavy downpour the Bhasone *Bandh* in the Katihar subdivision gave way and vast areas of the Katihar sub division were inundated. The standing crops were damaged In August, 1956 there was a recurrence of flood in the Kishanganj subdivision due to heavy rains in the Himalayan region. The flood water receded after two days. Again on the 14th and 15th September, 1956 Katihar subdivision had heavy rains which caused damage to standing crops and dwelling houses. Purnea town was waterlogged in parts.

The floods of 1956 caused widespread damage in the Sadar subdivision, Kishanganj subdivision and in Katihar subdivision. In Sadar subdivision the *thanas* Amaur, Baisi, Mufasil, Dhamdaha, Dharhara and Rupauli, in Katihar subdivision, *thanas* Katihar, Manihari, Azamnagar, Kadwa, Karandighi, Barsoi, Barari and Korha and in the Kishanganj subdivision Bahadurganj, Terhagach, Dighalbank and Thakurganj *thanas* suffered heavily. Flood water had entered in 431 villages in these three subdivisions. Relief measures were taken in the flood-stricken areas. Preventive measures were taken to control the spread of epidemics. Both Agriculturists and Land Improvement Loans were distributed. Gratuitous relief were given to poor and indigent.

The constant floods form a problem for the State Government. Detailed investigations are being made and both short-term and long-term remedial measures have to be adopted. The floods of the river Ganga are sought to be tackled by strengthening the private *bandhs* along the bank and made a continuous embankment along the Ganga from one end of the district to the other embankments from Narayanpur to Kursela and then up to Karhagola The problem of Kosi flood is being tackled by the Kosi Project mentioned elsewhere. The dead river Ramjan in Kishanganj town stagnates after the flood season is over A drainage scheme to insure a regular flow of Ramjan has been prepared. A Saura River Scheme suggests the closing up of the breaches in a number of embankments to prevent flood in Purnea town.

CHAPTER V.

INDUSTRIES

OLD TIME INDUSTRIES.

The indigo industry was in a flourishing condition in this district in the 18th and 19th centuries. The first record of indigo cultivation in Purnea will probably date back to the 17th century. The late Mr. A. W. Johnson, one of the last remnants of the indigo planters in Purnea district wrote to the Editor in 1952: "my own great-grand-father who was an indigo planter, came into the district in the 17th century; he died in Purnea, and is buried in the old Purnea cemetery. The date of death mentioned in his monument is 1825. The Palmers, Charles George who came into the district in 1803 were also old indigo planters. Mr. Charles Palmer was the proprietor of this estate, which is known as the Hayes Estate". The other well-known European indigo planters of Purnea district of the 19th and 20th centuries were the Downings, the Shillingfords, the McCoys, the Hayes, the Smiths, the Williams, etc.

The late Mr. A. W. Johnson further mentioned: "During the first part of the 19th century indigo was most popular crop with the cultivators as the manure derived from the foreign leaves supplied free manure for the other crops

Indigo was cultivated under three systems: (*a*) Direct cultivation of the planters, on the lands held by the factory, and which were known as 'Zerat'. (*b*) The other system was known as 'assaviwar'; under this system the tenants contracted to sow indigo, which was subsequently sold to the factory, under contract at a fixed price. (*c*) The third system was known as "Khuski". whereby the cultivator sowed indigo in his rent-paying holdings and sold the plant to the factory; he was not under contract for this area, but cultivated the indigo at his free choice. In some indigo concerns the tenants held their rent-paying lands at a special reduced rate of rental being an indigo tenant, in accordance with the provision of section 29, proviso III of the Bengal Tenancy Act.

The cultivation and preparation of lands for indigo, was usually in this district from October to February; manufacturing was from June to September; this period was not fixed, as it largely depended on the monsoon.

The common variety of indigo seed used for the cultivation of indigo, in this district was the "sumatrana" type which was obtained from the United Provinces, the best variety coming from the districts near Cawnpore In about 1904 a new variety of indigo seed was introduced into the district, which was introduced from Java; this type came originally from Natal; and was really an improved type of the wild indigo of that country. The superiority of the Natal over the Sumatrana type was very marked, when first introduced. 20 seers of finished indigo to the acre has been obtained and in selected fields, so much as a maund an acre has been known. The old Sumatrana variety only yielded an average of 8 seers per acre.

The method employed for extracting the finished indigo from the green plant is very simple and very ancient In the old days the manufacture was performed by hand; but in more modern times machinery was used. The first indigo factory to use machinery, in this district as far as I know was 'Belour' factory which was owned by Mr Frank Cruze, and which was situated in Manihari *thana* to the west of the present railway line running from Katihar to Manihari This factory has been entirely cut away by the Ganges, and there is no trace of it now. I had visited this factory in about 1912, and was very interested to see, and compare the old type of machinery used in this factory with that used in more modern and up-to-date factories

In about the year 1897 a great crisis in the indigo industry occurred. It was in about this year, that the synthetic product which is extracted from coal tar, was first put on the market by the Germans. The effect on the natural produce was almost instantaneous. The synthetic product was able to undersell the natural product, to such an extent that by 1904 the area of indigo grown was considerably reduced and several factories closed down. In the year 1914, when World War I started, and the consequent shutting off from Germany of the synthetic indigo supplies, there was a revival of the indigo industry due to the high prices the natural product fetched during these world war years, but this revival did not last long in this district, by the year 1920 most of the factories had closed down. Mr. Shillingford at 'Bhowgaon' and Mr. Crow at 'Sursee' were the last two indigo planters to manufacture indigo; even these two places closed between the years 1920 and 1925."

We may add to the contribution of the late Mr. A. W. Johnson. The cultivation of indigo was mainly carried through a system of advances, at rates varying from 8 annas to Rs. 2 per bigha of 2,400 square cubits or *haths*, according to the class of

soil. In return for such advances the cultivators agreed to hand over the land ploughed and weeded to the planter who merely sowed the seed.

Nilganj was the first place where this industry was started in the year 1775. The vats were then made of wood and the boilers of copper. This attracted the attention of the cultivators and gradually this industry extended up to Gondwara at the end of the 18th century. Generally the owners of these indigo factories were Europeans except a few Hindus whose factories were confined to the eastern skirts of the district. The main reason for the rapid development of indigo plantation was that the soil was less productive and was not suitable for the growth of any other crops or vegetables. In the 19th century this industry developed to such an extent that there were 92 indigo factories running at the end of that century.

The lands were usually taken on lease from the Maharajah of Darbhanga by a firm known as M/s J Thomas & Co In the year 1899 when the term of the lease was drawing to a close, a movement was started against growing indigo apparently in order to prevent the firm securing a renewal of the lease. This movement originated in an area where no indigo was ever grown but spread to the indigo-growing areas. In these circumstances the firm gave up the lease and the Darbhanga Raj resumed direct possession. The Darbhanga Raj demanded an enhancement of rents as well as the continuance of the cultivation of indigo and the ryots refused in a body to comply with its demands. The tension which ensued, resulted in many acts of violence on the part of the *ryots* but later on the tension declined with the help of the police. But gradually the cultivation of indigo went on declining and in the year 1908 there were only 21 factories against 92 a few years back.

There were some other advantages in growing indigo in the district of Purnea. They were as follows:—(*a*) During the months that indigo lands were being prepared and sown, no other crop could have been grown, (*b*) 3/4 lbs. of the indigo was sown on lands from which a crop had already been reaped, (*c*) in half of the lands, rice could be grown after the indigo had been cut and mustard invariably preceding the indigo, thus the *ryots* got three crops in a year, (*d*) on all the *diara* lands only one crop could be grown and that was indigo, for they went under water in July and remained under water till January and were not fit for ploughing till March, (*e*). the factory used to assist the cultivators by giving the bullocks, ploughs, money to pay off their *mahajans*, (*f*) besides the village cultivation, every factory gave

permanent employment to a large number of men as peons, blacksmiths, carpenters, thatchers, gardeners, ploughmen and ordinary coolies and lastly indigo was a cash crop and brought in ready money.

The planters and the cultivators were bound by a series of agreements covering as long as ten years sometimes. According to the agreement the *ryots* were bound to grow indigo on a certain quantity of land exclusively for the particular factory making the advances, not to sell the indigo plant produced on this land to any other factory, to get the land ready in proper time for sowing, to sow it when ready, to weed it at the proper time with the aid of the factory servants, to cut the plant when required to do so, to deliver a certain quantity of bundles per rupee.

The planter was bound to take any seed the plant may produce at a fixed rate, to make good any loss the cultivator may suffer from wilful negligence by the factory servants and in most cases to pay for the carriage of the plant either by cart or boat to the factory. These agreements were generally completed in the month of November and December every year, the sowing season began from January and lasted sometimes up to the middle of April according to the situation of the land. Weeding used to commence in April and consisted in removing only the larger weeds or young plants of the *Jhau* trees. When the earlier sowings were 3 to 4 ft. high, the plant was cut, leaving about half a foot still standing, in the hope of obtaining 2nd and 3rd cuttings from it.

The manufacture of indigo, which was called *Mahai* used to begin in June, the first process being the steeping of the plant in water in order to extract by fermentation the colouring material of the plant.

Another industry that has now completely died out from the district is the manufacture of *bidri* ware. When Hunter wrote his *Statistical Account of Purnea district in* 1877, *bidri* ware was flourishing. Hunter observed: "of the arts of Purniah District, the preparation and inlaying of *bidri* ware is by far the most interesting, both on account of the excellence of the articles produced, the dexterity of the artisans, and the division of labour used in the different operations of manufacture, a circumstance very rare in India. *Bidri* is a compound metal, and is prepared by members of the Kansari caste, who live in Bellori, a village situated about four miles from the Civil Station of Purniah. There are at present only four families in Bellori who follow this art, and four others of the same caste who make *serphoshes*

or covers for the native tobacco pipe or *hookah*. In the manufacture of the ware, the workmen are usually divided into three classes. The first melt and cast the metal, and turn it in a lathe to complete the shape, which is usually that of the ordinary *suraha* or water-vessel, or of a *hookah* stand. The second trace the figures and other designs on the work, which is then passed on to the third class, who, after doing the carving work, return it to the second, who inlay it with silver, give it a final polish, and stain the metal black. At Bellori, only the first of these operations, namely, that of melting, casting and turning the metal, is performed. The two other operations are effected in the old town of Purniah. The main component of *bidri* is the metal called by the natives of the District *jasta*, which is identical with the *dasta* of Bengal, or zinc, the other ingredient employed being copper. Lead is not used now, as it seems to have been in the time of Buchanan Hamilton. The whole process may be thus described : The workmen put a quantity of zinc into one earthen crucible, the copper being placed in a second but smaller one, the proportion observed being 176 parts of the former to 9 of the latter. Both crucibles are coated outside and inside with cow dung. A fire of cakes of dry cow-dung is made in a small pit, into which the crucibles are put and covered with fresh fuel. When the metals are fused the contents of the smaller crucibles are poured into the larger. In this operation, as lately observed, no measures were taken to prevent calcination. Buchanan Hamilton remarked that such a result was obviated by throwing into the crucible a mixture of resin and bees-wax. The fire is again piled round the larger crucible, and in a few minutes the two metals unite and are passed into a mould formed of baked clay. When the *bidri* has cooled, it is turned by the same workman, with the aid of a hired coolie who works the lathe. The vessel then goes to the second set of workmen, who inlay flowers or other ornament, usually of silver. These artisans first rub the *bidri* with diluted sulphate of copper, which gives its surface a black colour—a process which is intended to assist the designer in tracing the figures, which are thus more distinctly seen by the carver. The designing is effected by a sharp-pointed instrument of steel. When the design is traced, the vessel is passed on to a third workman, who carves or cuts out the design with small chisels of various shapes, and returns the work to the designer, who now with hammer and punch fills the cavities with small plates of silver which become firmly fixed into the metal. A final polish is given to the whole by rubbing it first with cakes made of shellac and powdered corundum, and then with a piece of charcoal. When the polish has been completed, a permanent

black colour is given to the *bidri* by the application of a paste formed of four parts of sal ammoniac, one of unrefined nitre, and five of rough saltpetre, freshly collected, the whole being moistened with rape-seed oil, to which a little powdered charcoal has been added. This paste is thickly applied to the ware, which is allowed to remain covered with it for four days. It is then washed, and is found to be of a fine black hue, which is not affected by water, and is not liable to rust.* It does not dint under the blows of a hammer, but breaks into pieces when too violently struck, although it is very far from brittle. It is not nearly so fusible as tin or zinc, but melts more readily than copper. *Jasta* or zinc sells in Purniah at the rates of 2¾ seers per rupee or 2 lbs. 12 oz. for a shilling. The proportion of copper to be mixed with this is about 2¼ *chataks*, which cost 4 annas or 6*d*. The melters and turners sell the ware produced from this amount of metal, usually two articles, at 2 rupees or 4 shillings, so that the profit they make is about 9 annas, or 1s. 1½*d*. The inlayers and polishers receive high pay. *Bidri* ware is of two kinds; the best is called *garkhi,* in which the workmanship is very good; the second kind is called *kavna bidri,* the designs on which are of a much plainer description, and the finish inferior. A *garkhi bidri* vessel of the ordinary size sell at from 14s. to £1. Although the preparation of the metal is confined to the kansari caste, the inlaying and polishing is carried on by members of many other castes, such as Sonars, Dhanuks, Sunris and Musalmans "

After Hunter's time Katihar had also become a centre of the industries. One Mohan Sonar and his brother Mukund Lal Sonar of Katihar are still remembered as expert *bidri* designers. Some of the old families have still got beautiful *bidri* pieces of flowers with eight petals interspersed with spiral small leaves inlaid in gold or silver.

The decline of aristocracy was one of the reasons for the decay of this industry. But the main reason was that none of the artisans was willing to instruct his children in the art. An investigation was made and the conclusion was that although there was a good market for the *bidri* ware, the margin of profit was small. The number of engravers and inlayers was large but the technique of the preparation of the amalgam was known to only three persons, namely, Satua Kaseri and Mauju Kaseri of Belauri and Udhu Sao of Katihar and they did not instruct their children or others in the technique. With the death of these three persons, *bidri* industry died out towards the beginning of the 20th century.

Even when Hunter compiled his Statistical Account of Purnea, some other industries carried out on a smaller scale have died out. Such industries were tent-making, preparation of the tooth-powder, working in glass, preparation of *sindoor* and red lead. Hunter found a fairly flourishing industry of lac bangles but this has almost died out now. Owing to the large pasturage, there was a flourishing industry of blanket weaving which Hunter had observed. Blanket weaving has also had a decline although as a cottage industry it is carried out here and there. In Hunter's time there was no jute factories but gunny used to be largely manufactured in the Kishanganj subdivision by the women of the Koch, Bhim and Polia castes who took the woven pieces to the market which had a ready sale The cottage industry of making paper—Hunter has mentioned about 30 families of country paper manufacturers (*Kaghaziyas*) at Kishanganj town has also died out. The paper was manufactured from jute fibre which was pounded into pulp and then mixed half its weight in lime. About 1 md. 4 srs. of jute was sufficient for the manufacture of four quires of foolscaps size. A quire was sold for four pice. The particular jute used for paper manufacture was the type known as the *Muniasi* and *Koshta*

It may also be mentioned that certain small cottage industries such as hand-pounding of rice, making of shoes, making of brass wares and weaving of cloth had a decline although there are scattered pockets where the making of brass wares and weaving of cloth are still carried out. A particular kind of cloth worn by the women in the rural areas is still manufactured here and there.

The old time industries were all hand driven. Later on, steam engine and diesel engines came into vogue mainly because of the enterprise of the indigo planters. After the closing of the last great war, a large number of power equipments belonging to the military were available in the market and several towns in Bihar had their own electric supply system. This is being now gradually replaced by the State Electricity Department. Now practically all the towns in Purnea District, namely, Katihar, Kishanganj, Purnea, Forbesganj and Jogbani, etc., have got supply of electric power through thermal power stations, but the present supply is not adequate. Several industrial units are still running their factory with their oil engine and quite a few of them who have got connections do not get adequate power according to their requirements. Some of the larger industrial units still generate power required for themselves. Without ready availability of electric power, it is

difficult to develop small and larger industrial units. With the completion of the Kosi Project, ample supply of power is expected to be available. Under the Kosi Project a Hydro power scheme for generating 13,000 K.W. is under consideration. According to the agreement on the Project 50 per cent of the power to be developed has been earmarked for use in Nepal. The requirement of electric power in the Third Five-Year Plan will be enormous if the district has to develop properly.

At present there is some industrialisation at Katihar area also. But when power will be available, there is bound to be a sprinkling of power-driven small industries throughout the district.

ELECTRICITY.

There was no State Electric Supply any where in this district for the ordinary consumer and towards the latter part of the First Five-Year Plan, Government took up a scheme for electrification Due to shortage of materials and difficulties of transport, however, actual construction could be started only in 1956. A diesel power station of 660 K. W. capacity has been constructed at Katihar and electric supply to Katihar town has been started since March, 1957. This power station also supplies electricity to Purnea for which 11,000 volts transmission and distribution lines and sub-stations have been constructed and supply has been made available for Purnea since 1957.

Electrification of Kishanganj town has been completed and a power house of 300 K. W. capacity at Kishanganj along with the necessary distribution lines and sub-stations have been constructed and Kishanganj is getting the benefits of electricity from the beginning of 1958.

Electrification of Forbesganj was taken up in the Second Five-Year Plan and has been completed. Forbesganj is getting electric supply from the end of 1958 and it has also been extended to Araria.

Besides the above towns, a number of villages lying close to the electric lines have also been electrified. Extension of supply from Manihari to Banmankhi and to Karhagola and Kursela has also been done. These were taken up after the electrification of main towns. The generating capacity of Katihar Power House has been increased for extending the supply to Banmankhi, Karhagola and Manihari.

The construction of the large thermal power station (of about 50,000 K. W.) at Barauni has already been taken up and in course of time this power station will give the supply to Purnea district and the present Pilot diesel generating station at Katihar, Kishanganj and Forbesganj will be closed down. Power in plenty will then be available all over the district at cheap rates.

Availability of electric power will naturally give a fillip to industrial development of the district and with this there will also be development in other associated fields.

With the State undertaking of electric supply there has been a general craze at least in the urban areas for consumption of electricity which is a distinct mark for the upgrading of standard of life. Industrial activities have also received a fillip and the small power engines separately owned by various concerns are being weeded out. Small industries are also expected to be much benefited by the availability of cheap electricity.

POWER.

In Purnea electricity is supplied by three power houses. namely, Katihar, Kishanganj and Forbesganj which were established in 1957, 1959 and 1960 respectively.

The Electrical Executive Engineer who has headquarters at Katihar is the administrative head of the Electricity Department at the district level. He is under the State Electricity Board with headquarters in Patna.

These power houses supply energy for domestic, industrial and public lighting purposes. The Katihar railway station is supplied electricity by the Katihar power house. Kishanganj power house began to supply energy from 1960 for irrigational purpose also.

The break up figures of consumption of electricity under different heads are given below:—

KATIHAR POWER HOUSE

Unit sold from April 1957 to November 1960

Year	Domestic or residential heat and small power.	Domestic and residential light and fans	Commercial heat and small power.	Commercial light and fans.	Industrial power, low and medium voltage.	Industrial power, high voltage	Public lighting.	Cinema	Irrigation.	Public water-works and sewage pumping	Railways	Total consumption.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1957 (from April).	2,172 KWH	1,03,927 KWH		.	1,05,186 KWH	.	21,279 KWH	10,048 KWH	.		1,79,528 KWH	4,18,540 KWH
1958	1,617 KWH	2,95,949 KWH		.	1,93,992 KWH	.	41,803 KWH	26,054 KWH		.	6,54,352 KWH	12,03,767 KWH
1959	18,847 KWH	3,56,277 KWH	..	..	1,79,835 KWH	.	54,625 KWH	24,016 KWH	.	.	9,33,497 KWH	15,67,086 KWH
1960 (up to November).	16,134 KWH	3,43,111 KWH	.		1,70,361 KWH	..	35,537 KWH	36,844 KWH	..	..	9,66,737 KWH	15,68,224 KWH

KISHANGANJ POWER HOUSE.

Unit sold from January, 1959 to November, 1960.

Year.	Domestic or residential heat and small power.	Domestic and residential lights and fans	Commercial heat and small power.	Commercial light and fans	Industrial power, low and medium voltage	Industrial power, high voltage	Public lighting	Cinema	Irrigation	Public water-works and sewage pumping	Railways	Total consumption
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1959	1,409 KWH	13,200 KWH	82 KWH	1,419 KWH	1,629 KWH		30,064 KWH	..	...	.	..	47,803 KWH
1960 (up to November).	1,160 KWH	1,11,944 KWH	3,409 KWH	.	85,457 KWH	9,175 KWH	30,742 KWH	5,257 KWH	15,613 KWH	..	.	2,62,757 KWH

FORBESGANJ POWER HOUSE.

Unit sold from June, 1960 to November, 1960

Year.	Domestic or residential heat and small power	Domestic light and fans	Industrial power, low and medium voltage	Public lighting	Cinema	Irrigation	Public water-works and sewage pumping.	Railways.	Total consumption.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1960 (from June to November)	Nil	49,434 KWH	37,571 KWH	8,975 KWH	..		.		95,980 KWH

Mining and Heavy Industries.

There are no mining and heavy industries in existence in Purnea district.

Large-scale Industries.

There are two jute mills, viz., Katihar Jute Mill and R. B. H. M. Jute Mill situated at Katihar. Both of them manufacture jute twine, gunny bags and hessian. Unfortunately, there have been far too many vicissitudes in the working of the two jute mills in the recent years mainly because of labour troubles. At present, Katihar Jute Mill has been working in three shifts and employs 3,500 workers on the whole. R. B. H. M. Jute Mill works only in one shift and employs nearly about 400 persons. The capital investment of the former is estimated at about Rs. 25 lakhs while the latter about Rs. 30 lakhs. Gunny bags and jute products manufactured by other mills are generally sent to Uttar Pradesh while hessian are marketed mainly at Katihar and sent to various destinations from Katihar. A portion of the hessian produced is locally used for packing purposes. As jute is the main industry in Purnea district, a separate section has been devoted to this industry and there will be a further reference to the working and output of the two jute mills in that connection.

Sugar mill.

There is no sugar mill in the district. There was one sugar mill at Semapur near Katihar which was managed by Messrs. Octavius Steel Company. It is reported that the sugar mill was closed down due to differences between the cane-growers, the ownership and the management. As a result, the acreage under sugarcane has gone down and sugarcane produced is locally used for making *gur*. It is under contemplation to start a co-operative sugar mill at Banmankhi and Government sanction has been accorded. It could not be ascertained as to why in spite of the sanction being given several years before, the mill has not yet been started.

It may be mentioned that there was one match factory at Katihar which was once closed down. It is understood that labour trouble was also at the bottom of the closure of this factory. The factory can provide employment to about 800 workers.

There are 247 registered factories in the district of Purnea. 33 of them have been registered under section 2 (*m*) and the rest under section 85 of the Factories Act, 1948. Factories registered under section 2 (*m*) employ 20 or more than 20 persons per day. Among the factories under section 2 (*m*),

Katihar Jute Mills, and R. B. H. M. Jute Mills, Katihar are the biggest factories employing persons ranging from 1,400 to 3,300 per day. There are 1,100 workmen employed per day in the Katihar Jute Mills and 3,300 persons are working per day in the R. B. H. M. Jute Mills, Katihar. There are a number of factories under section 2 (*m*) employing above 100 and below 200 workmen per day in the district. The rest of the factories registered under section 2 (*m*) employ persons from 25 to 100 per day.

The largest number of factories numbering 211 are small factories employing between 10 to 19 persons per day. Such factories are oil mills, saw mills, jute bailing press, atta mills, timber mills, engineering factories and other types of mills of miscellaneous types. Out of such types of factories the largest number of them are rice, oil and flour mills scattered throughout the district.

Jute is the prominent crop of this district. In the whole of this State it is only in this district that two jute mills are located at Katihar. Jute bailing press, its subsidiary industry is numerous in the district.

The importance of rice mills comes next to the jute mills and jute bailing presses. There are nearly more than 22 rice mills and oil mills in the district. Though it is not a surplus paddy district yet these rice mills exist on the supply of paddy from Nepal. It is only on account of this fact that rice mills dependant upon the supply of paddy from Nepal are in a state of crisis. The Government of Nepal have occasionally been restricting the movement of paddy outside. They obtain merely 25 per cent of the raw materials from this district where is good paddy harvesting.

SMALL-SCALE INDUSTRIAL UNITS.

As mentioned elsewhere Purnea in the past had quite a number of cottage industries. Some of these cottage industries like hand pounding of rice has now given way to small-scale industrial units such as rice mills. As Purnea is a very good rice producing area and also gets paddy and grains from Nepal, there are quite a number of rice and other food processing mills in Purnea district.

Rice Mill.—One rice mill was started at Katihar by some foreigner on the site on which the Katihar Jute Mill was subsequently located. The same was subsequently purchased by Chamaria Brothers (predecessors of the present owners of Jute Mill). They started establishing a jute mill side by side. As

the rice mill was not found as profitable as the jute mill the former was closed down. Later on several big rice mills were established at Katihar, Purnea, Sonaili, Garh Banaili, Jalalgarh, Forbesganj, Jogbani, Galgalia, Thakurganj, Kishanganj, etc., besides a number of hullers located in important points of rural areas throughout the district. Several small hullers have been established in the Katihar town as well with the result that the big units became less profitable and were closed down. The big and small units of other places are still surviving.

Oil Mills.—Shanker Kali Oil Mill was established at Katihar near about 1914. The ownership of the same has changed several times since then. Since 1938 it is named as Jamuna Flour and Oil Mills and flour mill was added to it. As adequate quantity of oil-seeds was not available locally the oil mills were run by bringing seeds from outside the State especially from Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. With the establishment of quite a number of big oil mills in Uttar Pradesh bringing seeds from Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan became rather unprofitable and thus they were closed down. Another reason for their closure was sealing of the market lying in East Bengal on creation of Pakistan. Still there are 4 oil mills at Forbesganj, one at Jogbani, one at Salmari and three are at Katihar (Choudhary Oil Mills, Jamuna Flour and Oil Mills, Oil Section of R. B. H. M. Jute Mills—all these closed). Some of them are still working but seasonally. Some of the other important rice and oil mills are as follows:—

Gulabbagh—Dharamchan Rice and Oil Mills.

Jogbani—Gaurishanker Rice Mills, Jogbani, Laxmi Rice Mills, Jogbani, Bhagwati Rice Mills, Jogbani.

Forbesganj—Mahabir Rice Mills, Bayunandan Rice Mills, Annapurna Mills, Jagdish Mills, Shramik Mills.

Jalalgarh—Raongta Rice Mills, Jalalgarh, Ganesh Rice Mills.

Garh Banaili—Great India Rice Mills.

Kishanganj—Hanuman Rice and Oil Mills, Indian Soap and Flour Mills, Kishanganj, Chandan Rice and Oil Mills, Kishanganj Ganesh Flour and Oil Mills, Kishanganj, Sugar, Rice and Oil Mills, Kishanganj, Abdul Taiyab Flour Mills, Kishanganj.

Thakurganj—Kamlesh Mills, Thakurganj, North Bihar Rice and Oil Mills, Thakurganj Rice Mills (P), Ltd.

Galgalia—Galgalia Rice and Oil Mills, Kamla Rice and Oil Mills.

These mills have installed machineries which have mostly been locally manufactured. There are a few machineries as for example boilers and oil engines which are imported ones

These mills are practically seasonal in character. They have to depend on the paddy grown in the Purnea district and also the border district of Nepal. During the war period the Government had the monopoly purchase and therefore, these mills were working as milling agents. They crushed the paddy supplied by the Government and were paid certain fixed rates for milling the paddy into rice. But the conditions have now improved and these restrictions have been removed. Therefore, the mills are now free to crush paddy and to sell them in the market. Of course, they have to submit returns of stock of both rice and paddy to the District Magistrates.

At times there are certain mills which have got weak financial position, have to close down earlier than others because they cannot purchase sufficient quantity of paddy during the crop season. Others who are financially strong, purchase sufficient paddy when it is available and they run the mills for the whole year. These rice mills have also oil mills attached to it. Therefore, they also manufacture edible oil. Purnea district is not an important place for growing oil-seeds. Therefore, these mills have to depend for their supply of oil-seeds from the districts of Bhagalpur, Monghyr, Saran and U. P.

These mills are, however, put to transport difficulties. The railway authorities give priority in allotment of wagons to the jute merchants. Forbesganj is perhaps the biggest jute purchasing centre in India. Therefore. on occasions these rice and oil mills do not get sufficient number of wagons for moving their goods from the mills to the market and also for transporting the oil-seeds and paddy from the purchasing centre to their mills godowns. Even jute merchants and mills complain of short supply of wagons.

Flour Mills.—There are two flour mills at Katihar, viz., Katihar Flour Mills and Jamuna Flour and Oil Mills. They are manufacturing *atta*, *maida* and *suji*. Milling capacity of these mills is estimated at 2,000 maunds and 1,800 maunds per

day of three shifts respectively. They are employing on the whole 200 and 100 workers per day in three shifts. The former has one workshop as well where repair works are undertaken. The total capital investment of both mills is estimated at Rs. 7 lakhs and 5 lakhs respectively. At present they are milling wheat and producing *atta, maida* and *suji* and functioning as Government supplier. The products of these mills are mainly lifted by the stock-holder for distribution to fair price shop dealers throughout North Bihar.

Match Factory.—There is a match factory named as Katihar Match Works at Katihar. It was established by members of Chamaria Brothers (of R. B. H. M. Jute Mills) during Second World War period. After working successfully for several years it has recently been closed. Efforts are however being made to re-start the factory. When the factory was working in full swing, it provided employment to about 1,000 persons. The total capital investment in this factory is estimated at 4 lakhs of rupees.

Ice Factory and Cold Storage.—There is an Ice Factory-*cum*-Cold Storage at Katihar owned by M/s. I. B. Shaw and Co Formerly it started with an Ice Factory plant of 2 tons per day which was subsequently enhanced to 5 tons per day. The ice plant works only seasonally and supplies ice for local consumption as also for transporting fish. Recently they have started a cold storage section and are storing potatoes and other vegetables. They are also experimenting on storage of fruits like orange, mangoes, etc.

There is also one cold storage at Forbesganj and the other at Kishanganj. The former has been assisted by State Finance Corporation. Both these storages mainly store potatoes and vegetables.

The total capital investment of these ice factory and cold storages is estimated at Rs. 8 lakhs and they are providing employment to 80 workers.

Jute Press.—Purnea is a jute-growing area. Firms trading in jute started a number of jute presses for the convenience of their own as well as for others. At present, a number of jute presses are working in Forbesganj, Katihar, Kishanganj and Purnea. The name of the jute presses is given below:—

(1) Sheo Lal Gajanand Jute Press, Forbesganj.

(2) Basant Lal Kantailal Jute Press, Forbesganj.

(3) Bajunandan Jute Press, Forbesganj.

(4) Rambilash Raghunath Prasad Jute Press, Katihar.

(5) Mohan Jute Company, Katihar.

(6) M/s. Shanti Nayak Dev Narain Jute Press, Purnea.

(7) M/s. Shanti Nayak Jugal Kishore, Jute Press, Purnea.

(8) Hanuman Jute Press, Kishanganj.

(9) Shekhar Chand Sarogi, Jute Bailing Press, Forbesganj.

Gur Khandsari.—In a few part of the district Sugarcane is grown in abundance. As there is no sugar mill in the district, most of them manufacture *gur* on very small scale with the help of bullock driven crushers. Falka, Bhawanipur, Sondip and Kursela areas used to grow a lot of sugarcane before and still grow.

Concentration of Artisans—(a) Weavers.—There is a concentration of weavers of Baisi, Amour, Barsoi and Kishanganj. They engaged themselves in weaving indigenous cloth on traditional looms.

(b) Blacksmiths.—People engaged in blacksmithy are found in most of the villages of each P.-S. of the district. They still manufacture small agricultural implements.

(c) Carpenters.—There is a heavy concentration of carpenters at Chakla in Kishanganj subdivision. Nearly 150 families are engaged in the manufacture of bullock-cart wheels and other accessories for carts. In the villages of the district the carpenters manufacture ordinary type of furniture. A few of the good artisans from among them came over to the looms and settled there.

(d) Tobacco Crushing.—Though Purnea is not a tobacco growing area but it is grown in a very few parts of the district such as Kursela, Barari, Dhamdaha, etc. Most of the growers export their produces to outside markets. A few people have started tobacco stalk crushing industry at places like Kursela and the tobacco dust exported to Calcutta.

(e) Hides and Bones.—This district is one of the biggest exporter of hides and bones in the State of Bihar. Hides and bones are collected mainly in Araria and Kishanganj subdivisions. People engaged in collection of hides and bones do not utilise the same for further processing locally. Hides and bones are purchased by big firms from outside and are taken to Calcutta and Madras.

Wood and Timber Industry.—Jogbani is an important centre for wood and timber industry. Logs of wood are brought from Nepal and are being sawn and shaped into timber and other building materials at Jogbani. There is a big market for this. Several smaller units are also working side by side at Purnea, Katihar, Sonaili, Forbesganj, etc., which manufacture furniture, doors, windows, cart-wheels, ploughs, planks, etc. A Carpenters' Industrial Co-operative Society covering 150 families of carpenters is working at Chakla in this industry. They are at present manufacturing cart-wheels and meeting local requirements. A number of these units have been assisted by the Government by granting loans under the State Aid to Industries Act, 1956.

New Industries.—After enactment of the Bihar State Aid to Industries Act, 1956 there has been a turn in the development of industries and some new types of mechanised small-scale industries are being turned out. Members of business community assured of Government assistance under the State Aid to Industries Act and supply of controlled commodity especially iron and steel material have stepped into this sphere.

The following new industrial units have been established:—

Agrawal Metal Industries, Katihar.—This unit has started production of Pilot Bicycle pump since 1958. It is equipped with all machineries required for manufacture of bicycle pump. Snearing, drawing, welding, electroplating and finishing. All the processes are done here and finished pumps are marketed throughout Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and North Bengal. The unit has a capital investment of about 2 lakhs and the installed capacity is for manufacture of 2 lakhs pieces of pumps annually. At present 32 workers are employed in it.

Recently they have started manufacture of cycle carriers as well and they expect to start manfacturing 5,000 number of complete bicycle. Their scheme for manufacture of complete bicycle has been sanctioned by the Government to the extent of 5,000 pieces annually.

Bucket Manufacturing Unit—Katihar Bucket Works.—It is a Government aided unit undertaking manufacture of G.-I. bucket. A loan of Rs. 15,000 has been granted to this unit under State Aid to

Industries Act. It is likely to start production in full swing shortly when the supply of required raw material is received.

Wire Nail Factory—Kalyan Industrial Corporation.—A wire nail and spade manufacturing unit has been started at Katihar in the year 1958 under this name. The unit is engaged in regular production of wire nails. The total capacity of the unit is estimated at 450 tons per annum. 10 workers are at present employed in it. The total investment of the unit is estimated at Rs. 50,000 including Rs. 15,000 granted by the Government as loan under State Aid to Industries Act.

G. I Pipe and Accessories—Katihar Engineering Works.—This unit has been established in the year 1958 and started production since December, 1959. It has been manufacturing galvanised iron pipes, bands and sockets from B. P. sheets. All the processes of industry are undertaken by it. It is proposing to start manufacture of strainer as well in its units. Its product has a good market both local and outside the State. It has been executing supply of tube-well pipes to various development projects under Community Development Blocks and Public Health Engineering Department.

The total capital investment of the unit is estimated at Rs. 2,50,000 excluding Rs. 50,000 granted as loan with a capacity for manufacture of 8,00,000 ft. of G. I. Pipe annually. Nearly 40 full-time workers are employed.

Biscuit Manufacturing Industry—Jai Bharat Biscuit Company.—This is a Government aided small-scale unit turning out biscuits, cakes, loaves, etc Its total capital investment is estimated to be Rs. 50,000 and it is providing employment to 22 full-time workers. Its products are marketed locally as well as other stations of North Bihar and North Bengal.

Tannery of Md. Jalil, Forbesganj, Purnea—Purnea is one of the biggest exporters of raw hides and skins and there is a great scope for development of Tanning Industry. Hence this scheme was initiated in the month of

January, 1958 for the production of sole leather mainly by the vegetable tanning process. The unit has been advanced a loan of Rs. 10,000 in the month of July, 1958. Besides the sole leather manufacture, they are tanning special hides and skins of tiger, deer, snake, crocodile, lizard. The sole leather produced has a good market in the district itself. The present investment is about 22,000 and 5 persons are employed. This is a poor beginning but the industry has a future.

Toy Making Unit.—One unit located at Baisi turns out very fine cloth dolls and other toys. The unit has been granted loan for development of the industry. The products of this unit have been well appreciated.

Others.—There are other units manufacturing window grills, maintaining repair workshop at Katihar, fruit preservation unit at Thakurganj. Gur Khandsari unit at Falka, blacksmithy-*cum*-repair workshop at Gulabbag, brush-making unit at Katihar working into district.

The following amount of loan has been advanced under State Aid to Industries in the district from different levels:—

Level.	Year.	Amount.	Total cases.
		Rs.	
District level	1956-57	24,000	5
	1957-58	80,000	29
	1958-59	1,10,700	52
	1959-60	1,07,140	14
Subdivisional level	1958-59	9,500	...
	1959-60	42,540·85	..
Block level	1956-57	12,900	...
	1957-58	55,560	...
	1958-59	46,440	...
	1959-60	22,232	..
State level	1957-58	22,000	...
	1958-59	85,000	...
	1959-60	50,000	...

Industrial Co-operatives.—There are a number of Industrial Co-operative Societies working in the district. Improved types of tools and machines are being supplied to them. Not much work has yet been done by them so far but it is expected that with better managerial assistance, experience and adoption of business methods they will improve. Some of them are—

(1) Katihar Charmodyog Sahyog Samati manufacturing shoes, holdall, leather suitcase, bags, etc.

(2) Purnea Nagar Charmodyog Sahyog Samiti manufacturing shoes, holdall, leather suitcase, bags, etc.

(3) Katihar Small Agricultural Implements Manufacturing Industrial Co-operative Society manufacturing small agricultural implements and domestic utensils.

(4) Roshna Jute Weavers' Industry Co-operative Society manufacturing Jute mats.

(5) Carpenters' Industrial Co-operative Society, Chakla, manufacturing wooden furniture, show case, etc.

(6) Carpenters' Industrial Co-operative Society, Chakla manufacturing wooden articles and bullock cart wheels.

(7) Metal Utensils Industrial Co-operative Society, Dholbajja manufacturing bell metal utensils.

Training-cum-*Production Centres*.—There are at present 22 Training-*cum*-Production Centres running in the district. The Training-*cum*-Production Centres impart training in following crafts:—

(1) Tailoring and Cutting.

(2) Knitting and Embroidery.

(3) Carpentry.

(4) Blacksmithy.

(5) Soap-making.

(6) Durrie-weaving.

(7) Cotton-weaving.

Industrial Training Institute.—The following are the Industrial Training Institutes which impart training in various crafts:—

Name.	Number.	Seat.	Trained personnel.	Personnel under training.
1. I. T. I, Katihar ...	1	60	66	60
2. Purnea Engineering School	1	180	...	360
3. Women Industrial School, Purnea.	1	60	82	22
4. Women Industrial School. Kishanganj.	1	40	35	20
5. Usha Tailoring School, Katihar.	1	35	22	20
6. T. C. P Centre (Tailoring and Cutting, Knitting and Embroidery, Carpentry, Durrie-weaving, Cotton-weaving, Bee-keeping, Soap-making, Black-smithy, etc.	28	661	434	577

Demonstration Centre.—There is one Government Mulberry Silk Farm at Roshna Hat for development of mulberry silk. One Assistant Superintendent, one Reeling Supervisor and several other technical personnels are posted there. They train the villagers in mulberry silk farming and supply mulberry sapplings and eggs to them free of cost and provide technical advice as and when required. The cocoons produced by the villagers are also purchased by the farm and reeled silk sent to Silk Institute, Nathnagar. Training in reeling is also imparted. At present 25 persons have taken up rearing independently after rearing training.

Khadi and Village Industries.—Ranipatra Sarvodaya Ashram in this district is mainly concentrating on Khadi industries. The main Khadi and village industries of the district are Oil Ghani, Hand-pounding of rice, Palm Gur and Bee-keeping.

Village Oil Industry.—There are at present 34 Oilmen's Co-operative Societies working in the district. There is one

Ghani Manufacturing Centre at Ranipatra Ashram near Purnea. A sum of Rs. 1,06,550 as loan and Rs. 3,250 as grant has been advanced in the district to different Oil men's Co-operative Societies. At present 63 improved Ghanies and 450 traditional Ghanies are working in the district.

Hand-pounding Industry.—There are at present 39 Hand-pounders' Co-operative Societies working in the district. A sum of Rs. 65,000 has been advanced as loan to different societies. The production is nearly 4,495 maunds and 1,480 persons are employed.

Palm Gur Industry.—There are three Palm Gur Societies working in the district. A sum of Rs. 3,000 as loan and Rs 3,400 as grant has been advanced.

Bee-keeping.—At the beginning of 1960 an attempt has been made to organise the bee-keeping industry. An area bee-keeping office has been opened in Purnea town and four sub-offices have been opened in Purnea, Katihar, Araria and Garh Banaili. Not much work has been done so far.

COTTAGE INDUSTRIES.

Purnea district had a number of flourishing cottage industries in the past particularly on the lines of handloom weaving, blanket weaving, making of baskets and mats, brass ware and ordinary carpentry. O'Malley in the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* had mentioned "Coarse cotton cloths, called *photas* and *bukis*, are woven by the indigenous weaving castes on primitive looms in different parts of the district, but the industry is dying out owing to the competition of cheaper European piece goods. Cotton carpets (*satranjis*) were formerly made by a few families in the town of Purnea, the thread being spun from raw cotton purchased at Ruigola, a quarter of Purnea town, which, as its name implies, was the headquarters of the trade in imported cotton. The carpets were almost invariably of a simple stripped pattern, white and blue alternating, and are described as having been very strong and durable. Cleaning of cotton is effected by Musalmans called Dhuniyas or Nadaps, who visit the district in the cold weather months. For carding the cotton they use a wooden bow, the string of which is twanged by means of a heavy mallet called a *dihista*. The cotton is imported wholesale and sold to petty dealers called *paikars*, who

come to Ruigola from the principal markets in this district and the adjoining districts of Malda and Dinajpur."

The cottage industry of cotton weaving has had a revival after independence has been won. The Welfare State of Bihar has laid down a firm commonly identified policy of the revival of cottage industries. The Khadi and Village Industries Board sponsored by the State Government has taken up the revival of various cottage industries and has been able to revive cottage weaving throughout the district. The Sarvodaya Ashram at Ranipatra with its branches and the various *Charkha Sanghs* have given great encouragement to the indigenous weaving castes. Facilities of giving credit, distribution of *charkhas* and looms and better marketing condition have helped the revival of weaving of coarse cotton cloths. Cotton carpets (*Satranjis*) are, however, no longer made although there could be a revival of this also.

Blanket weaving is still carried on by small colonies of *gareris,* a caste who usually tend sheep and weave blankets. Blanket weaving has also had a setback, owing to the influx of mill-made blankets and it is doubtful if this cottage industry could be revived to its previous flourishing condition as mentioned by O'Malley in the last *District Gazetteer.*

Fancy straw baskets, mats, cart-wheel, brass utensils are made at various places within the district. Bell-metal utensils of Kishanganj and Araria subdivisions have a past tradition while cart-wheels turned out at Chakla village in Kishanganj have a very good sale. There are still a few families at Purnea, Araria and Kishanganj who make fire-works but they have had a setback in this cottage industry owing to the cheaper fire-works that come to the market before *Diwali* holidays.

INDUSTRIAL POTENTIAL AND PLANS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT.

There are potentialities for a number of industries: It is a jute and paddy growing area and hence there is enough scope for the industries based on the raw materials. Katihar is also a business centre having good transport and communication facilities. Various industrial units have already been initiated and some are being initiated. The following statement supplied by the District Industries Officer in November, 1960 shows details of the applications for loans, etc., under various schemes for Purnea district pending at the headquarters office of the Department in Patna. No investigation results as to the suitability of

these items were, however, made available by the District Industries Officer:-

Statement showing the various aspects and the present position of the Small Scale Units under disposal at Patna headquarters at the end of 1960.

Number of units.	Types of unit.	Investment required.	Loan applications recommended.	Expected employment.		Expected production.	Expected Sale.	Power required	Remarks.
				Direct.	Indirect				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
		Rs.	Rs			Rs	Rs.		
7	Barbed wire, Iron Foundry--*cum*--Machine shops, Electric Motor, Cycle carrier, Saw Mill --*cum*--Carpentry and Wire net. Stainless Steel Utensils.	2,80,000	2,60,000	336	..	88,65,000	88,65,000	460 H P.	

A very ambitious plan for tapping the industrial potentialities of the district has been drawn up for Purnea district. Under this scheme Government are expected to sponsor the following items among others:—

(*i*) An industrial estate covering an area of about 100 acres and accommodating 100 units which is expected to be started near a big factory or in a semi-urban area.

(*ii*) A rural community workshop which will be a sort of miniature industrial estate covering an area of about 10 acres and accommodating 15 industrial units which is expected to serve the rural areas providing smaller facilities as the industrial estate.

(*iii*) Centres which develop cottage industries and more especially the handicrafts and things of artistic nature.

There are also the schemes to start a weavers' colony and home for women which will rehabilitate women from the brothels, the destitutes and the deserted. To the co-operative

sector has been given the schemes of starting 10 industrial co-operatives, one jute mill, one paper mill, one tannery, one bone mill and one *pucca* jute mill, one *kachcha* jute mill and one Raniganj-tile manufacturing unit and a brick manufacturing unit on mechanised methods. For the individual and co-operative sector are also assigned a weaving mill including a tannery, a cycle assembling unit, cardboard manufacturing unit utilising paddy straw and jute carpet, etc. Provision has been made for marketing depot at district headquarters and three marketing depots at each of the subdivisional headquarters. It is also expected that there will be a series of marketing depots at the block headquarters. It is expected that in the Third Five-Year Plan, employment will be found for about 19,000 persons.

The development of pisciculture in Purnea district may be the base of a flourishing industry. There is no dearth of custom for fish both internally and externally. Purnea has got almost innumerable tanks, ponds, ditches scattered throughout and particularly in Dhamdaha, Korha, Forbesganj, Raniganj and Kishanganj thanas. Most of these water patches are perennial and could well be utilised for growing fish. Certain types of mudfish like *Kewai* and *Mangur* grow abundantly in these water patches without the least care. Growing of fish will also be a help for the eradication of mosquitoes. Fish culture will also be a good source of revenue to the Government and income to the people engaged in that trade. The availability of ice at a cheap price is a necessity for organising a good incidence of export of fish. Fish trade has been covered in a separate chapter.

The State Government have started a fish fry distribution centre at Katihar and an attempt is being made to develop the pisciculture on the right line. In order to make the centre self-supporting and prospecting, catching of fish spawns is done near Manihari Ghat from middle of June to August. There is no dearth of fishermen in the district but they have to organise on co-operative lines.

Development of industries will naturally depend on facilities for transport, communication and market facilities. We have covered these issues in a separate chapter. It may, however, be repeated here that the district of Purnea enjoys a wonderful primary and secondary market by the way of numerous *hats* in the villages and a large number of fairs which run through all the months in the year excepting the two rainy months. The primary markets are well supported by a series of secondary markets with some sort of facilities for storing jute and other

grains. Because of jute, big merchants have sunk capital in fixing up well-laid godowns. It may also be mentioned here that the physical configuration of the district is such that a cart could be taken almost anywhere after the crops are cut. It has been investigated that in an ordinary market day at Gulabbagh from vegetable worth an anna to jute worth thousands of rupees are transacted in the course of one day.* As a matter of fact the existence of a very large number of markets, *hats* and *melas* in the rural areas has reacted on the growth of townships adversely. This is one of the reasons why Purnea has got so few towns. Anyone who has visited Gulabbagh, Khakshibagh, Sonaili, Forbesganj on any of the market days will be struck by the great role these markets play in this district.

For trade the fairs are the same as the markets but they have a great scope and serve a more broad-based purpose The fairs at Garbanaili (October), Forbesganj (November), Gulabbagh (December), Khagra (January), Sarsi (January-February), Madanpur (March) attract thousands of persons every day. The slightly smaller *melas* at Harda Dharamganj, Barna, Manihari-ghat, Karagola, etc., etc., also clear a large turn over of merchandise. These *melas* and fairs have recently been much helped by the development of the roads. Buses and trucks, hundreds of them are on the roads of Purnea district every day. Ware-house facilities particularly for jute have recently been extended to Forbesganj which has been studied as it was found that they have become extremely popular in spite of some initial difficulties. Postal communications and particularly the opening of a large number of telegraph offices, extension of telephone system and more of radios have helped the dissemination of trade news which is so very vital for the merchants, big or small. The main industry being jute and the clearing house being Calcutta, the merchants at Katihar, Purnea, Kasba, Forbesganj, Banmankhi or Kishanganj are always in active touch with Calcutta for trade news through the postal, telegraph and telephone facilities.

EMPLOYERS' ORGANISATION

There is no Employers' Association as such functioning in this district. Some of the employers are members of Bihar Chamber of Commerce or Jute Mills Owners' Associations. There is one association of owners of Small-scale Industrial Units at Katihar which is looking after the difficulties of the member units. The function of this unit has so far been limited to representation of grievances of the member units in respect of supply of controlled commodities and electric power.

Labour at Katihar.

The labour force in the two premier jute mills at Katihar is of heterogenous group hailing from different districts of Bihar, viz., Saran, Champaran, Darbhanga and Uttar Pradesh, viz., Gorakhpur, Deoria, Balia and Unao. The local people are very poor, the total number of employees in (1) Katihar Jute Mills is 1,192 and (2) R. B. H. M. Jute Mills, Katihar is 3,341. There are 81 persons employed in the Katihar Jute Mills in the managerial, supervisory, clerical and darwan capacities. Out of 81 persons six supervisors, six clerks and 11 darwans belong to Bihar. In the R. B. H. M. Jute Mills, Katihar out of 3,341 employees, there are 177 persons employed in the capacity of managers, supervisors, clerks and darwans. Among these 177 persons there are practically no Bihari employees except a few darwans and clerks. The Bihari unskilled labourers in these mills are nearly 70 per cent of the entire labour force. There is extreme necessity to insist upon the two managements to give a fair representation of natives of this State on the managerial, supervisory and clerical staff. Bihar is not now lacking these requisite talent, skill and other acquisitions.

The strength of labour force in the 22 rice and oil mills in the district is nearly 2,000 during the period when the mills work on full fledged scale. Besides these rice and oil mills the number of workers in the rest of the factories under section 85 of the Factories Act is about a thousand or twelve hundred. Definite figures from the smaller factories are difficult to obtain as they usually fluctuate.

The necessary information bearing on productive efficiency is not available because there is no system of job evaluation in any of the factories.

Although covered in "Economic Trends" Chapter the wage level of the different types of industrial labour may be briefly touched upon here. A basic wage fixed for an unskilled worker is Rs. 26-4-0 per month of 26 working days. The minimum basic wages of the clerks and Durwans are Rs. 51-9-0 and Rs. 33-6-0 respectively with an annual increment of Rs. 2-13-0 to the clerks. The basic wages of other skilled workers in the maintenance and engineering sections vary according to skill ranging between Rs. 24-6-0 to Rs. 156-12-0 per month. The salaries of other supervisory, administrative and managerial staff are not based on any minimum basis. Among the other kinds of payment made to the workers dearness allowance is being paid at a flat rate of Rs. 30-7-6 per month of 26 days to all categories of employees, including clerical and watch and ward staff.

All the monthly paid staff is given a Puja Bonus for one month's salary or Rs. 100 whichever is less.

The wage rate and D. A. have been fixed at 6¼ per cent less than what is given in the Bengal Award of 1951. Benefits of provident fund, gratuity and other medical facilities under the Employees State Insurance Scheme are available to the employees.

In the rice, oil and flour mills the minimum rates of wages have been fixed by the State Government. Minimum rate of wages fixed in these employment is Rs. 1-6-0 per day. Such minimum rates of wages have not been fixed for employees in saw mills, engineering factories and other types of miscellaneous factories.

The two jute factories at Katihar have provided for canteen and creches for the employees of their factories in accordance with the provisions of the Factories Act. Medical facilities are now provided to the workmen according to the provisions of the Employees State Insurance Scheme. These are in the shape of treatment of patients including specialised treatment and cash payments. There is a State Welfare Centre at Katihar where facilities have been provided to the workers for recreation, library, indoor and outdoor and cultural activities.

The Katihar Jute Mills has 278 quarters and 160 quarters have been built by the R. B. H. M. Jute Mills Katihar for their employees. There are no welfare facilities available to workmen in all the rice, oil and flour mills except what is required under the Factories Act.

The Bihar Shops and Establishment Act came into force in the municipal limits of Purnea on 1st April 1957. 842 shops have been recognised in this town under the Act. The number of employees covered is approximately 1,000. Nearly 200 shops are yet to be registered. The workers are benefited to the extent of getting timely payment of their wages, weekly holidays and annual holidays for 20 days with pay. The chances of security of their services have now improved. The cases of non-payment of wages and less payment of wages have declined.

Labour Welfare.

The workers engaged in the mills are not well organised. They are poor, illiterate and ignorant of recent developments in labour legislation. Only one union has recently been registered under the Trade Unions Act, 1926. This union is known as Purnea Zila Food Industries Workers' Association. But it has not fully consolidated its position as yet. Only the mills at

Forbesganj and Jogbani have been able to derive benefits from this union.

The State Government in the Labour Department has fixed minimum rates of wages for the workers engaged in rice, dal, oil and flour mills. The minimum rate is Rs. 1-6-0 per day for the daily rated workers and Rs. 45 for the monthly rated workers. These mills have generally enforced the minimum rates fixed by the Government and the workers' economic position has been improved in spite of the absence of a strong trade union movement among them. Only the benefits of annual leave with wages under the Factories Act are enjoyed by the limited number of workers because the labour being local, they do not stick to the factory throughout the year. At times, they leave the factory without taking permission from the employers and therefore the continuity of their service is broken, and they lose this privilege.

In Purnea district another important centre from the point of view of industrial labour was the portion of Kishanganj subdivision where four tea gardens were situated. This area has now merged into West Bengal as a result of the recommendation of the States Reorganisation Commission.

The jute mill workers are generally housed by the employers. But some of the workers have constructed their own housing accommodation and live in them. Arrangements for their health and sanitation have been made by the mills.

A Labour Welfare Centre has been started by Government of Bihar in the jute mills area. The welfare centre is run under a Labour Welfare Officer assisted by a Lady Welfare Worker and a staff. The welfare centre has made arrangements for the recreation of the workers. A library has been set up in the centre in which English, Hindi and Urdu papers have been subscribed. Books are also issued to the workers. Night schools have been also opened for the adult workers. For their children arrangements have been made to teach the three R's and weaving and knitting. In the welfare centre equipments for the indoor and outdoor games have also been kept and the workers have been showing great enthusiasm in the welfare activities. Besides, music, drama and *Harkirtan* are the normal features of the welfare centre.

The Labour Department has also sponsored a hospital at Katihar under the Employees' Staff Health Insurance Scheme for the workers. Under this scheme a percentage of the workers' pay is credited into an account while the management also has to give a similar amount. The money is utilised for providing

hospital facilities to the workers. There are State Government doctors (both male and female) and ample provision for medicines. Important cases are quickly transferred to the Katihar and subdivisional hospitals.

There is also an Industrial Tribunal with headquarters at Patna presided over normally by a senior member of the Judiciary. The Industrial Tribunal takes up important disputes between the workers and the management.

Indian National Trade Union Congress

The workers of the jute mills have become very conscious of their rights and privileges. There are four unions one under the communist, one under the socialist, and the two under the I. N. T. U. C. The I. N. T. U. C. union command the majority of workers. The I. N. T. U. C. fight for the rights and privileges of the workers constitutionally but the other two unions at times try to utilise the workers for fulfilment of their party programmes In Katihar there was a match factory employing about 1,000 workers but owing to labour troubles, the management was compelled to close down the mills along with other causes and since then the mill has not re-opened. About three thousand persons dependent on the match factory had to be thrown out.

The jute industry like others has badly suffered due to slump conditions that have overtaken the industry in India. However, there has not been any major retrenchment in the jute mills except at Katihar jute mills. The jute industry is now showing signs of improvement and no major change is expected at these factories

The number of factories registered under the Factories Act, 1948, is 268. The workers of these factories get the benefits under the Factories Act, Workmen's Compensation Act, Payment of Wages Act, Maternity Benefit's Act, etc., The total number of workers under the factories is 9 562

Labour Unions.

As mentioned before, there are a number of Trade Unions concentrated at Katihar. There are Katihar Mazdoor Sangh, Jute Mazdoor Panchayat and Katihar Mill Workers' Union affiliated to Indian National Trade Union Congress, Hind Mazdoor Sabha and the All-India Trade Union Congress respectively.

It is understood that I. N. T. U. C. is affiliated to the Indian National Congress, Hind Mazdoor Sangh to the Praja Socialist

Party and A. I. T. U. C. to the Communist Party. The Katihar Mazdoor Sangh is the only recognised Union of the workers of the two jute mills. The Jute Mazdoor Panchayat Sabha has been recognised by the Jamuna Flour Mills, Katihar. The Trade Unions fight for the rights and welfare of the workers. Occasionally they have brought about strikes and lock-outs. It is commonly held that the labourers are now more conscious of their rights than of their obligations.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

The Bihar Weights Act, 1947 came into force in the whole of Purnea district in December, 1951. There are two Inspectors working in the district, one is in charge of two subdivisions. One is posted at Purnea and is incharge of Araria subdivision and the other is posted at Katihar incharge of Kishanganj subdivision.

There were two systems of weights in Purnea district. They were 64 tolas and 80 tolas. 64 tola seer was called "*Kacha seer*" and 80 tola seer was called "*Pucca seer*". Besides, there was a "*Tokari*" system. There were different kinds of *Tokaries*. One *Tokari* was equal to 5 seers, 2½ seers, 1 seer, ½ seer, ¼ seer, ⅛ seer, 1/16 seer, and 1/32 seer. If one had to gve ½ seer of commodity, he used to give one *Tokari* of ½ seer. Those *Tokaries* are akin to "*Paila*" (or small baskets) system still in vogue in parts of Chotanagpur Division.

The distribution of weights over the parts of this district in the past is given below :—

Thanas.		Place.	Weights in use
Khazanchihat	..	Purnea, Bhatta Bazar Madhubani.	80 tolas.
Sadar	..	Purnea city, Gulabbagh, Khoksibagh Ranipatra, Diwanganj Rautara.	80 tolas.
Kasba	..	Kasba, Garbanailee,	64 tolas.
		Jalalgarh.	80 tolas.
Araria	..	Araria, Araria Bairgachhi, Kusiargoan, etc.	80 tolas.
Forbesganj	..	Forbesganj, Dholbaja, Simraha.	80 tolas

Thanas.	Places.	Weights in use.
Narpatganj ..	Narpatganj, Fulkaha, Basmatia, etc.	80 tolas.
Raniganj ..	Raniganj ..	64 tolas. 90 tolas. Token system
Banmankhi ..	Banmankhi ..	80 tolas.
Dhamdaha ..	Dhamdaha ..	80 tolas. 64 tolas
Rupauli ..	Bhawanipur, Birauli ..	80 tolas. 64 tolas.
Amour ..	Baisee, Amour ..	64 and 80 tolas.
Palasi ..	Palasi	64 and 80 tolas.
Sikti ..	Sikti	64 and 80 tolas.

The old system of Bullion weights were called as *"Bhari"* divided into *Pices, Rattis* and *Lal.*

16 annas = 1 *Bhari* equivalent to the weights of one rupee of silver coin.

1 anna = 4 *Pices.*

1 pice = 4 *Rattis.*

1 ratti = 2 *Lals.*

The *Lals* were smallest denomination of weights used in trade. These *Rattis* and *Lals* were a kind of seeds of bean.

After the enforcement of Bihar Weights Act, 1947, those abovementioned non-standard weights and scales have been replaced by standard ones in the district of Purnea.

Standard weights.

Standard weights are manufactured by licensed manufacturers under Bihar Weights Act, 1947. The manufacturers are supplying stamped weights to the dealers and ultimately to the traders. There are some licensed dealers in Araria and Sadar subdivisions for weights.

Adoption of new system of weights and measures (Metric system).

The diversity in weights and measures which constantly enter into the common transactions of daily life, is a source of much confusion and difficulty. Variations in weights from place to place prejudice the chance of the cultivator getting a fair price for his produce in the markets within his own State and also in other States. Prices of different commodities in different parts of the country are quoted on the basis of local weights. Since the names of the weights used and the weights which each one of them indicates vary from place to place, the quotations are not understandable except by those in close touch with the markets concerned and the cultivator is rendered helpless in his dealings with the skilful traders.

The only remedy is to set aside this multiplicity of local and regional system of weights and measures and substitute in their place a uniform system which should be easy to learn and use, unequivocal and common throughout the country.

The uniform system is a Metric System. It is nothing more or nothing less than the application of decimal number system, to measurement. In this integrated system the units of length, surface, volume, capacity, and mass are based on the metre as the fundamental unit and as a primary and essential condition of the system, all must bear a strictly decimal relation to each other.

This system has been enforced (1960) and will put an end to the confounding diversity of current weights and measures with all their attendant disadvantages and bring about the much needed standardisation of weights and measures so essential for widening commerce, facilitating trade and strengthening national solidarity.

SMALL-SCALE INDUSTRIES.

(a) Distribution of Small Scale Industrial Establishments.

(*Based on Census of Small-Scale Industries, 1951.*)

District, Subdivision and Police-station.	Number of establishment.				Number of handlooms in textile establishment.					Total number of establishments.
	Over nine months.	Over six months but less than nine.	Over three months but less than six.	Less than three months.	Cotton.	Silk.	Wool.	Rayon including staples fibroyarn.	Others.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
DISTRICT TOTAL ..	3,752	129	262	286	2,044	..	21	66	..	4,429
Araria subdivision ..	289	..	..	..	45	..	..	1	..	289
Araria	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
Sikti	2	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	2
Forbesganj	73	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	73
Narpatganj	20	..		..	..	..	..	..	..	20
Raniganj	44	..	..	..	44	..	—	..	..	44
Forbesganj town ..	144	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	144
Kishanganj subdivision ..	2,946	127	255	282	1,519	..	..	65	..	3,610
Kishanganj	75	..	..	..	61	..	..	..	..	75
Goalpokhar	202	..	13	..	7	..	..	65	..	215

SMALL-SCALE INDUSTRIES—*contd.*

(a) Distribution of Small-Scale Industrial Establishments—*concld.*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Dighalbank	64	..	..	125	..	..	..	..	..	64
Bahadurganj	583	46	21	31	621	..	..	..	..	681
Terhagach	1,214	72	221	251	204	..	..	..	..	1,758
*Islampur	338	..	..	..	325	..	..	..	..	338
*Chopra	269	..	..	..	61	..	..	..	..	269
Thakurganj	139	9	..	..	82	..	..	..	..	148
Kishanganj town ..	112	..	..	..	33	..	..	..	..	112
Sadar subdivision ..	517	2	7	4	480	..	21	..	..	530
Purnea	51	..	1	..	51	..	..	..	..	52
Amour	77	..	..	72	..	..	..	..	..	77
Barari	5	..	..	..	15	..	..	..	..	5
Karandighi	43	..	..	35	..	..	..	..	..	43
Barsoi	224	2	6	4	246	..	..	..	..	236
Katihar	117	..	..	..	61	..	21	..	..	117

*Now in West Bengal.

SMALL-SCALE INDUSTRIES—*contd.*

(*b*) Employment in Textile Establishment.

(*Based on Census of Small-Scale Industries, 1951.*)

District, Subdivision, Police-station and Industry Group (Code number and name).	Total number of Establishment.	Number of persons employed.													
		Total number.		Male.						Female.					
				Total.		Boys.		Men.		Total.		Girls.		Women.	
		W. T.	P. T.	W. T.	P. T.	W.T.	P.T.	W. T.	P. T.	W.T.	P.T.	W.T.	P.T.	W.T.	P.T.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
DISTRICT TOTAL ..	2,131	2,968	2,752	2,008	1,814	122	164	1,886	1,650	960	938	57	205	903	733
2·62	2,040	2,902	2,627	1,966	1,775	122	164	1,844	1,611	936	852	50	187	886	665
2·63	4	9	20	8	20	..	..	8	20	1	..	..	..	1	..
2·82	21	49	..	33	..	..	..	33	..	16	..	..	..	16	..
2·85	66	8	105	1	19	..	..	1	19	7	86	7	18	..	68
Araria Subdivision ..	46	53	2	53	2	..	..	53	2	..	..		..	..	..
2·62	44	44	..	44	..	..	..	44	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
2·63	1	8	..	8	..	..	..	8	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
2·85	1	1	2	1	2	..	..	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	..

SMALL-SCALE INDUSTRIES—*contd.*

(*b*) Employment in Textile Establishment—*concld.*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
2·63. Sikti ..	1	8	..	8	..	..	..	8	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
2·62. Raniganj ..	44	44	..	44	..	..	..	44	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
2·85. Forbesganj town	1	1	2	1	2	..	..	1	2		..	..	..	..	..
Kishanganj subdivision	1,584	2,231	2,479	1,355	1,647	66	112	1,289	1,535	876	832	47	176	829	656
2·62	1,516	2,223	2,356	1,355	1,610	66	1,121	280	1,498	8[illegible]8	746	40	158	828	588
2·63	3	1	20	..	20	..	..	..	20	1	..	..	..	1	..
2·85	65	7	103	..	17	..	..	..	17	7	86	7	18	..	68
2·62. Kishanganj ..	61	63	..	63	..	..	..	63	..		..	..	..	..	..
2·62. Goalpokhar ..	72	14	104	7	17	..	..	7	17	7	87	7	18	..	69
2·62	7	7	1	7	..	..		7	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
2·85	65	7	103	..	17	..	..	..	17	7	86	7	18	..	68
2·62. Bahadurganj ..	621	748	743	417	441	30	66	387	375	331	302	19	83	312	219
2·62. Dighalbank ..	125	189	53	102	36	..	..	102	36	87	17	..	..	87	17
2·62. Terhagach ..	204	326	445	130	272	17	18	113	256	196	173	12	25	184	143
2·62. Islampur ..	325	635	575	453	535	4	16	449	519	182	40	7	16	175	24
2·62. Chopra ..	61	48	335	19	171	1	14	18	157	29	164	2	34	27	130
2·62. Thakurganj ..	82	152	153	116	140	14		102	140	36	13	..	..	36	13
Kishanganj Town. ..	33	56	71	48	35	..	..	48	35	8	36	..	..	8	36

2.62	30	55	51	48	15	..	..	48	15	7	36	..	..	7	36
2·63	8	1	20	..	20	..	..	..	20	1	..	..	..	1	..
Sadar subdivision ..	501	684	271	600	165	56	52	544	113	84	106	10	29	74	77
2·62	480	635	271	567	165	56	52	511	113	68	106	10	29	58	77
2·82	21	49	..	33	..	..	..	33	..	16	..	..	..	16	..
2·62. Purnea ..	51	94	6	94	6	..	..	94	6	..	..	..	..	..	..
2·62. Amour ..	72	130	..	130	..	10	..	120	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
2·62. Barari ..	15	15	..	15	..	..	..	15	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
2·62. Karandighi ..	35	135	..	98	..	10	..	78	..	47	..	8	..	39	..
2·62. Barsoi ..	246	203	265	182	159	36	52	146	107	21	106	2	29	19	77
Katihar	82	107	..	91	..	..	..	91	..	16	.	..	..	16	
2·62	61	58	..	58	..	..	..	58	..	..	..	..	.	..	..
2·82	21	49	..	33	..	..	..	33	..	16	..	..	.	16	..

2.62—Cotton spinning, sizing and weaving.

2.63—Cotton dyeing, bleaching, printing, Preparation and sponging.

2·82—Woollen spinning and weaving.

2.85—Manufacture of rayon.

SMALL-SCALE INDUSTRIES—*concld.*

(c) Employment in Non-Textile Establishments.

(Based on Census of Small-Scale Industries, 1951).

District, Subdivision, Police-station and Industry Group (Code number and name.)	Total number of Establishment.	Number of persons employed.													
		Total number.		Male.						Female.					
				Total.		Boys.		Men.		Total.		Girls.		Women.	
		W. T.	P. T.	W. T.	P. T.	W.T.	P.T.	W. T.	P. T.	W.T.	P.T.	W.T	P.T.	W.T.	P.T.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
2·00 Sweetmeat-maker.	170	427	131	836	96	18	12	368	84	41	35	4	8	37	27
2·11 Paddy husking ..	1,659	2,350	567	226	59	15	20	211	39	2,124	508	77	133	1,747	375
2·12 Flour Mill ..	7	30	..	26	...	...	...	26	...	4	...	...	...	4	...
2·21 Gin pressing ...	54	132	20	94	10	1	...	93	10	38	10	...	...	38	10
2·31 Gur making ..	16	8	30	8	30	1	...	7	30	...	..	...	..	...	...
2·51 Biri-making ...	40	224	4	224	4	...	...	224	4	...	..	..	...	...	...
2.71 Tailoring ...	33	104	2	104	1	8	...	96	1	..	1	...	...	...	1
2·91 Leather Tanning	1	10	...	10	...	...	...	10	...	...	..	...	...	...	...

2·92 Cobblers ..	66	90	4	90	4	2	..	88	4	...	...	...	..	...	..
3·01 Blacksmithy ..	62	151	62	151	62	9	40	142	22	...	...	...	...	...	...
3·02 Brass Works ..	103	112	438	53	239	8	74	45	165	59	199	20	73	39	126
3·31 Cycle repairing	16	43	...	43	...	2	.	41	...	...	...	...	...		...
3·40 Electric work ..	10	12	54	12	54	12	...	...	54	..	...	...	...	...	...
3·82 Soap factory ..	4	26	...	26	...	...	...	26	...	...	...	...	...	..	...
4·04 Gold Smithy ..	70	157	38	157	38	5	3	152	35	...	...	...	...	...	...
4·05 Musical Instrument.	3	4	...	4	...	.	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
4·09 Toy making ..	2	..	6	..	6	...	.	...	6	...	...	...	...	...	...
4·41 Pottery ..	106	166	227	76	113	16	10	60	103	80	114	35	18	45	96
4·43 Bangles making	2	1	17	1	17	...	10	1	7	...	...	...	...	...	...
4·52 Carpentry ..	83	225	53	217	53	19	2	198	51	8	..	...	...	8	...
4·7 Furniture work ..	2	.	7	...	7	...	...	...	7	...	...	...	...	...	...
4·92 Book-binding ..	2	5	..	5	...	...	...	5	...	...	..	...	...	...	...
Grand Total ..	2,511	4,267	1,660	1,913	793	116	171	1,797	622	2,354	867	436	232	1,918	685

W. T.=Whole time.
P. T.=Part-time.

Progress of the Existing Small-Scale Units.

No. of units.	Industrial aided.	Total loan advanced.	Types of Crafts for which aid given.	Total investment of the aided units.	Total production of the aided units.	Total sale.	Employment. Direct.	Employment. Indirect.	Remarks.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
		Rs.		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.			
394		6,54,848.07	Carpentry, Blacksmithy, Shoe-making, Biscuit making, wire nails, Galvanised Iron pipe, Agricultural Implements, Toy making, Fruit Preservation, Tannery, Jute Weaving, Bamboo work, Brick Kiln, Dairy farming, Cane and Bamboo work, Cycle Parts, Electroplating and Heat treatment, Scent manufacture, Zarda making, Vegetable gardening, Poultry, Metal, Utensils, Gur Khandsari.	10,00,000	8,67,200	8,10,000	1,200	1,000	

UNITS WHICH HAVE ALREADY BEEN INITIATED AND BEING INITIATED

Name of units.	Types of units	Investment required	Loan applied	Expected employment direct and indirect	Expected production	Expected sale	Power required	Remarks
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
		Rs	Rs		Rs.	Rs		
1 Straw Board from Paddy Straw, Kishanganj 2 Wood screw, Kishanganj 3 Chrome Tannery, Khagra, Kishanganj 4 Metal Rolling Plant, Forbesganj 5 Nuts and Bolts, Forbesganj and Jogbani 6 Gur and Khandsari, Forbesganj 7 Soil Pipe, Forbesganj 8 Tin Containers and Printing, Gulabbagh, Purnea and Forbesganj 9 C. T. S Cable wire, Gulabbagh 10 Sofa set spring, Gulabbagh. 11 Automobile Servicing and repairing, Gulabbagh 12. Safety Razor Blade, Katihar 13. Tobacco Crushing Kursela 14. Cycle Bell, Katihar. 15. Hume Pipe, Katihar 16 Aluminium Utensil, Katihar	..	31,47,[illegible]70	[illegible],15,000	529	59,50,150	59,50,150	700 H P	

Besides the above, a complete cycle manufacturing unit with a capacity of [illegible],000 pieces a year, steel furniture unit and safety pin unit are expected to start within the financial year

NOTE—Besides the above units, each block is starting one small scale industrial unit on co-operative basis which will be 24 in number

CHAPTER VI.

JUTE.

Jute Cultivation.

It cannot definitely be stated when the plant was actually introduced in the district though its antiquity cannot be questioned. The word *patta* meaning a peculiar kind of fine cloth made of bark occurs in *Manu Samhita*, which seems to indicate that the plant was known in 800 B. C. Again the epic *Mahabharata* recorded in 300 B. C. contains reference to *pat*, meaning "to surround", which has, therefore, been interpreted as the fibre surrounded the stem*. In spite of its antiquity the cultivation of jute did not develop to any great extent until the middle of the nineteenth century.

Francis Buchanan who travelled in the district during 1809—11 did not mention the word "jute" but under the section fibres he had mentioned the plants reared for making thread or ropes. He had mentioned "The *corchorus* is by far the most common. It is probable that as in Rouggopur both the capsularis and *olitorius* are cultivated for this purpose. This plant and its fibres in the district of Mithila is most usually called San, to which particular attention ought to be paid, as this is the name which in Bengal is given to the *crotolaria juncea*, that here is called Gor San. The *corchorus*, however, in various parts of the district is also known by the names Pata, Patua San and Meghnal."†

Dr. Buchanan's account makes it clear that the cultivation of jute plant was mainly cultivated only for making threads and ropes for household domestic purposes. This is also corroborated by the *Report on the Marketing and Transport of Jute in India*, published in 1957. As it mentions, "In spite of its antiquity the cultivation of jute did not develop to any great extent until early in the nineteenth century. Prior to that period, the leaves of the plant were used for food and medicinal purposes, while the fibre was used for cordage and for making a coarse kind of cloth called *tat* or *chote*". In 1833 the estimate of Jute crops for Purniah was 3,400 maunds as would appear from *the Bengal*

**Report on the Marketing and Transport of Jute in India* (Economic Research Memoir, Calcutta, 1957).

†*An account of the District of Purnea* by F. Buchanan (1809—11), p. 382.

Monthly Sporting Magazine and Bengal Register, V. 1, 1833, p. 219.

The potentialities of the fibre as a substitute for flax and hemp had long been present in the mind of the English traders in India, but for long it was not cultivated for commercial purposes. W. W. Hunter in his *Statistical Account of Purniah* had mentioned that "Previous to 1867 there was scarcely any jute cultivation in the district, but in that year it received an impetus from the great demand for gunny bags The tracts in which it is mostly grown lies along the *Tarai* in the Kishanganj and Araria subdivisions, including *parganas* Sultanpur, Terakharda, Sripur, Powakhali, and Fathipur Singhia. The land is there high and the soil rich The fields generally selected border the high banks of rivers and khals. Jute is also produced to some extent on the high sandy plains which stretch from north-west to south-east right across the district, through Amur-Kasba, a little north of Purniah town "*

From the above it may be presumed that by 1867 jute in Purnea district began to be cultivated not only for domestic purposes for threads and ropes only but also for commercial purposes due to a great demand for gunny bags. During the period under review, India had monopoly of jute industry as foreign countries did not manufacture jute France, America and later Italy and Germany turned to jute manufacture in the last decade of the nineteenth century. At that time several jute mills were working in Calcutta and there was great demand of the raw jute. The cultivators of Purnea who hitherto raised the fibre plant only for domestic purposes increased the acreage of jute cultivation due to its great demand for manufacture in Calcutta. The establishment of jute mills in foreign countries in the last decade of the nineteenth century caused an additional demand for the raw fibres and consequently there had been a great extension in jute cultivation.

Hunter had mentioned that i the years 1872-73, about 15,000 acres were under jute.

Byrne in the *Survey and Settlement Operations Report of Purnea* (1901—08) had mentioned that fibres predominate in the areas for non-food crops and jute was the important fibre. According to Byrne the total area under jute was 1,18,044 acres as against 12,89,474 acres under rice. There was apprehension in some quarters that jute was displacing food-crops and its cultivation was responsible for the widespread rise in prices of

Statistical Account of Bengal, Vol. XV, 1877, p. 290.

foodgrains. But Byrne had come to his plea on the basis of the statistics under food crops. As the area under rice, viz., 12,89,474 acres, was nearly eleven times as great, it was clear that in Purnea there was no ground for the belief that jute had displaced rice to any large extent. Moreover, in some localities where the lands were very good, an *aghani* rice crop and a *bhadai* jute crop were raised from the same land. "It means" writes Mr. Byrne "continuous and rather exhausting labour, as the jute crop needs careful weeding and the soil needs careful preparation before hand. Then cutting of the jute, the transport to the steeping tank or pond, the retting, and the sending it to market require unremitting labour during the most trying season of the year. It requires very hard labour, again to get rid of jute stumps and roots from the ground in time to transplant the rice seedlings. Still, the profits are enormous with even an average outturn, when jute and rice are selling at present prices. Five maunds of jute worth Rs 40 and fifteen maunds of paddy worth Rs. 50 can be got from one acre of this *dhanpatua* land as it is called. Deducting rent cultivation and other charges, a net profit of Rs. 60 could be got from an acre of such land."* Half the jute-growing areas were reported to be in two thanas of Islampur (now in West Bengal) and Bahadurganj Araria and Kadwa came next, with over 12,000 acres each. The percentage of jute crop area to the net cropped area was 6 17

From the "Report on the Marketing and Transport of Jute in India", it appears that the period between 1904-05 to 1907-08 witnessed a remarkable increase in jute cultivation in Bengal.** From 1908-09 to 1920-21, the estimated jute cultivation varied between 24 and 34 lakh acres in India as against 39,74,300 acres in 1907-08. The economic depression which commenced in 1920-21 witnessed a considerable decrease in the area under jute which was estimated at 15,18,358 acres in 1921-22. Since then it is reported that there have been violent fluctuations in the estimated jute acreage from year to year, and the high figure of 1907-08 namely 39,74,300 acres has been surpassed once only in 1940-41 when the area under jute was estimated at 56,68,700 acres. Afterwards, the area under jute fell off due to the operation of the Bengal Jute Regulation Act, 1940, which was passed by the Government of Bengal in April of that year with the purpose of regulation of jute production.

**Purnea Settlement Report* (1908) and mentioned in the *last District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911), pp. 88-89.

**At that time Bengal comprised of Bihar, Orissa and Assam as well. The figures that are given are for the whole of India.

The Act enforced the taking out of a licence for each jute grower in Bengal, the individual area, being increased or decreased in proportion equal to the overall increase or decrease in the area of jute. Although there was no such Act in Bihar, the overall production in undivided India during 1946-47 dwindled to 19,10,300 acres and 56,47,900 bales respectively and in 1947-48 the year of partition the area of production in the Indian Union was estimated at 6,53,000 acres and 16,58,800 bales only. The overall decrease in the area was noticed in Bihar also as the jute economy of Bihar was intimately connected with Bengal where almost all the jute mills were located. The partition highlighted the necessity of increasing the jute production within India and the starting of new jute mills. The Bengal Act was amended in April, 1948 to bring about some relaxation to the restriction on the cultivation of jute. So far as Bihar is concerned the acreage had gone on fluctuating depending on the expectation of jute price.

Prior to partition, the cultivation of jute was an Indian monopoly as practically the whole of the world crop was then grown in United India However, as a result of the partition in 1947, a considerable proportion of the jute-growing areas of India went over to East Pakistan which is now a foreign territory. So it became essential from the point of view of self-sufficiency to increase the area of the jute cultivation within Indian dominion

Bihar stands second in importance to West Bengal in the matter of jute cultivation In 1953-54 it accounted for 25 3 per cent of the total acreage in India In Bihar, Purnea district has about 81 per cent of the estimated acreage under jute. The distribution area under jute in Bihar during 1953-54 was as follows:—

District.	(Area (thousand acres).	Percentage of the total acreage in Bihar.
1. Saran	1 98	0·65
2. Champaran	9.00	2·97
3. Muzaffarpur	6·95	2·29
4. Darbhanga	5·03	1·66
5. Bhagalpur	0.04	0·01
6. Saharsa	32·39	10·67
7. Purnea	246·41	81 20
8. Santhal Parganas	1·67	0.55
Total	303·47	100·00

This statement indicates the importance of jute cultivation of Purnea in Bihar. *The Bihar Statistical Handbook*, 1955, published by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Government of Bihar mentions the area under jute crop as 2,01,000 acres in 1954-55 as against 3,02,000 acres in 1955-56.

FACTORS OF CULTIVATION.

The land is prepared by repeated ploughing, harrowing and weeding in March and April; manure in the shape of ashes and cow-dung is used but sparingly. The organic manures are seldom used by a few enlightened people. The seed is sown broadcast in May after the first shower of rain, after which the crop does not require much attention, except that care must be taken to prevent water from logging in the field as it rots the stem near the root and destroys the plant. A rainfall of two or three inches spread over a month at the time of sowing, and about two inches per week subsequently is considered favourable for jute Excessive rainfall and a soil saturated with moisture retard sowings and interfere with the after treatment of seedlings, i.e., weeding and harrowing. If such conditions persist, the plants are affected adversely. A loamy or sandy soil is best suited for jute. A loamy soil is preferable to stiff clay or sandy as the former does not absorb rain water and the latter does not retain moisture

Seed.—The growers generally utilize a part of their crops for seed production. The factors governing the proportion of crop so retained depend on the suitability of land for seed production and the quantity of sand required for sowing one unit of area. The lands suitable for seed production are the high lands and middle lands. Low-lying areas are not used for this purpose to any great extent as the plants are liable to damage by flood. Ordinarily, only such area is retained by each grower as will yield enough seed for his own requirement, the surplus, if any, being sold in villages and *hats*. But some cultivators, particularly those whose lands are suitable for seed production retain areas for the excess of their individual requirements with the object of selling the surplus elsewhere. But in Purnea the percentage of area retained for seed is low due to the use of comparatively less seed per acre for sowing. On an investigation by our staff, it was gathered that on an average two and half seers of seed is required for a local *bigha* land of four and half *haths*. According to the enquiry, the average area retained by growers for seed in 1953-54 was 2.52 per cent to the sown area. The following detailed

figures for Purnea district are taken from the *Report on the Marketing and Transport of Jute in India* (1957):—

Area retained for seed purposes and fibre retained for domestic use (as reported by witnesses).

Scope of enquiry. Land for seed. Fibres for domestic use.

Number of growers interrogated.	Area sown (acres.)	Outturn (mds.).	Area retained.	Percentage to sown area.	Quantity retained (mds.).	Percentage to outturn.
119	188.16	1524.72	4.75	2.52	68.84	4.5

Weeding.—When the young plants are three or five inches high the land is sometimes weeded and harrowed by means of an implement called *pansi*. Weeding is done usually twice and about 20 labourers are required for a local *bigha* of land. Harrowing is locally called *bidha* and two labourers are usually required for one local *bigha* of land for this operation.

Harvesting.—Jute plants are ordinarily ready for harvesting about four months after sowing. The harvesting season, however, depends on the variety of the jute sown, the type of land on which it is sown and weather conditions. If the rains at the time of sowing and during the period of growth are late, the harvesting of crops would obviously be delayed. Or, if there is danger of plants being submerged through floods, they may have to be cut early. Thus, the seasonal condition factor and the different times at which growers cut their crop, spread the season of harvesting over a period of two or three months for each variety. *Capsularis* which is locally called *deshi* or *muniashi*, being usually sown a month or two before *oblitorious* (locally known as *sonpat, sonabang*), matures earlier and is generally harvested from mid August to October. About 70 per cent of the jute area in Purnea is under *capsularis*. A new variety of jute locally known as *chandipat* has been introduced recently. It is of inferior quality but has the susceptibility of thriving even in poor arid land which was pasture before. It is harvested about fifteen to one month before *capsularis*. The plants are generally harvested before the cold season sets in, by which time they are healthy and from 5 to 10 ft. in height. As soon as they are sufficiently grown and are about to blossom, they are cut off at about two inches from the root. Plants are considered to be immature at the bud formation stage; hence although the fibre of the plants harvested at this stage is soft and silky, the yield is

small and its spinning qualities are generally poor. In actual practice the plants are seldom cut before they flower unless weather considerations or an impending flood compel the growers to do so. It is universally recognised that the longer the jute plants are allowed to grow, the heavier will be the yield. After cutting, the stalks are formed into small bundles. Plants of partly water-logged fields are either piled flat on adjacent dry land or left standing in a slanting position in the same field. When the latter method is adopted, the roots necessarily remain immersed in water thereby softening them more quickly. The practice of allowing the plants to shed their leaves reduces the weight of the bundles and economises the labour necessary for steeping while the fallen leaves serve as manure.

Steeping.—Jute fibre is situated in the outer layer of the stem, between the wood on the inside and the cortex on the outside and is surrounded by soft tissues. The stalks of the plants which are formed into bundles immersed in a pond, ditch or other standing water and left to steep. The steeping process is called retting. During retting which is a fermentation process brought about by bacterial action, these tissues get softened with the result that the fibre can be separated readily in the subsequent process of stripping. The quantity of the fibre depends greatly on the care exercised in retting. Therefore, after the plants have been in water for about a week, they have to be examined almost daily to ascertain the progress of retting. The process is regarded complete when the fibre separates easily from the wood or stick. Stripping is ordinarily started soon after the retting has been completed. If stems are left in water too long, the resultant fibres become weak and dull coloured. The time required for retting of jute stems depends largely on the type of water available, the prevailing weather conditions and the stage at which plants have been harvested. The approximate time taken in retting during early period (mid June to mid July) is 13 to 17 days, intermediate period (mid July to mid August) is 15 to 20 days and in late period (mid August to mid October) it takes about 18 to 25 days.

Stripping and washing.—When the retting is complete, bundles are either taken out on land or brought to shallow water for the purpose of stripping the fibre. The worker holds the root of a small bundle (*ante*) in the left hand, and separates the lower end of the fibre of each plant with the right, holding the lower end of the fibre between the fore and middle fingers of that hand. After the fibre of all the stems in a bundle has been loosened at the root ends, the fibre and sticks are greatly

pulled apart. The stripped fibre is later made into small bundles which are washed in clean water either the same day or on the following day.

The other method of stripping is that completely the retted bundles of jute stems are taken out of water and placed either on the roadside or on an embankment. Small bundles are then broken into two or three parts by means of a mallet. The fibre is separated from the sticks by shaking the stems and washing them in water. As against single-stripping, this method is said to save some labour, although fibre so extracted does not appear to be as good as that obtained by the former method.

There is another method of stripping called collective stripping which is done by beating together the root ends of a few plants by means of a mallet in order to loosen the fibre from stems. The root ends of the fibre thus loosened are then taken in hand and the fibre is separated from the sticks by jerks.

Drying and bundling of fibre.—As a rule, the fibre is dried in the sun. It is hung on bamboo frames, two-thirds of it from the top and hanging on one side and the rest on the other. Sometimes, the fibre is also dried by spreading it on thatched roofs and on the grassy ground in front of the growers houses. The time taken for drying depends on weather conditions, but given enough sunshine two or three days are sufficient to complete the process. When dry, the fibre is made up into lots of about five seers each and tired at the top ends locally called *dharas*. The *dharas* again folded into small compact bundles called *muttas* which are later made up into bigger bundles (*bojhas*) to facilitate transport. The bundles vary in weight from half a maund to one maund each.

Cost of Production.

As stated before jute crop requires a continuous and exacting labour on the part of the grower. The land is prepared by repeated ploughing. Some of the processes are rather technical and needs skilled labour. As the season for jute coincides with that for *aus* paddy and also with the season for the transplantation of *aman* paddy, there is a great competition for jute labour. The wages of the labourers particularly during the harvest time go up high. Moreover, the processing of the fibre can only be done by working in water for long periods under very unhygienic conditions. The labourers are exposed to malaria and skin diseases. Any delay in the performance of any of the processes will affect the quality adversely. So the labourers' demands are great and are paid much higher wages than those

prevailing at any other time of the year. Another factor which affects the cost of processing is that the number of labourers required per unit of area is much more than for any other crop for the same unit. Purnea cultivators generally depend on labourers from the neighbouring districts of Bhagalpur, Darbhanga, Champaran and Saran.

The rate of wages conforms to one uniform pattern with slight variation throughout the district. Local labourers are generally paid in kind and the outsiders are paid both in cash and kind. There is also the share system mainly during the stage of washing. But payment in kind is general rule and preferred more than other systems. Besides offering breakfast and a mid-day meal, three or four seers of paddy are paid to a labour for weeding, cutting and steeping, etc. The average cost of meal is between six to eight annas. The hours of work are generally six to eight hours. The labourers share is fixed by mutual agreement. Generally, as mentioned before, washing and stripping is done on the share system and the labourers receive one-eighth to one-seventh of the fibre stripped by them. The average cost of preparation of fibre per acre in Bihar as mentioned in the *Report on the Marketing and Transport of Jute in India*, 1957 was as follows:—

Items of expenditure.		Number of hand required.	Wage rate.	Total.
			Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
1. Cutting and bundling	..	14	1 8 0	21 0 0
2. Carrying and steeping	..	10	1 8 0	15 0 0
3 Stripping and washing	..	14	1 8 0	21 0 0
4. Drying and bundling	..	5	1 8 0	7 8 0
5. Total expenses per acre 10 mds.	..		Expenses per md.—Rs. 6-5-0.	64 8 0
Yield per acre 20 mds.	..			

BALERS.

Up to the secondary market stage, jute is handled by the growers, *beparis* and *dalals* in loose form made up into bundles of varying sizes and weights. After reaching the markets, the fibre is normally packed into, what is commonly called *katcha* bales. This is a type of packing used extensively in the internal trade, the jute being compressed to a relatively high density by

means of hand or power screw presses. The *katcha* balers undertake the preparation of jute for sale in the terminal market (mainly Calcutta) and other consuming centres or to *pucca* balers. The functions involved therein are, firstly, the selection of the unassorted jute into the generally recognised types of categorised commercial goods and secondly, its packing into *katcha* bales Broadly speaking, the, term "*Katcha* baler" embraces all dealers who own or hire establishments for preparing *katcha* bales.

In Purnea district *pucca* baling establishment is located only at Kishanganj. The *pucca* balers secure jute in the same manner as the other purchasers. After selection and assortment, the fibre is packed by means of hydraulic presses into bales of high density measuring 10½ c. ft., and weighing five maunds (400 lbs.) net each. These are called *pucca* bales and are generally intended for export.

MOVEMENT OF JUTE.

It appears from the results of the Marketing Enquiry conducted in 1953-54 that jute growers in Bihar sold, on an average, 83 per cent of their marketable surplus of jute at villages. 6 per cent at primary markets and *hats* and 11 per cent at secondary markets*. Among the factors responsible for the sale of growers' jute at villages mention may be made of insufficient finance, the smallness of the marketable quantity, the diversity of weights, the presence of intermediaries, the storage problem and transport difficulties.

There is not much of importance of water transport in Purnea district for carrying goods from villages to primary or secondary markets. The average small cultivator does not take his jute produce by road or rail to a bigger market. He will sit on the roadside with a few seers of jute on the *hat* day and wait for a small dealer to come and buy the stuff. Even where good communications are available they do this either through agelong habit or because he does not have the finance to go some distance or it is not economic for him to do so because of the small quantity of jute he can offer for sale. As a result jute in Purnea is primarily available in the villages or *hats* or at the primary markets.

The choice of the place of sale is again influenced by the financial position of the peasant. According to local enquiries, when the growers borrow from intermediaries they undertake to

*Report on the Marketing and Transport of Jute in India, p. 105

sell their fibre to the creditor-dealers, with the result that when the *farias* and *beparis* go round the villages buying jute, the debtors have to sell to them locally more often than not at prices below the market price. As a result the prices are often fixed by the creditors at the time of lending money to cultivators. A good number of cultivators take loans from creditors on standing jute and paddy crops. In Purnea, verbal transaction of loan is commonly prevalent. This sort of loan is locally called *dadan* and *agua*, i.e., loan advanced to the growers on condition of supply of their produce in repayment. The price of the produce is determined by th ceredítors at the time of advance The price of the produce so fixed usually comes to roughly 30 to 35 per cent less than the market value of the produce. Secondly, the repayment is generally made at the time of harvest when the markets are glutted with fibres, by which the creditor will lose from 20 to 25 per cent. Advance sale is often ruinous. In 1960 the jute price had a spurt while the average grower had made an advance sale at about half the price.

The marketable surplus of the individual growers of jute is reported to be not large. A jute grower produces on an average about 20 maunds of jute; but as some of this fibre is retained for domestic consumption, the marketable surplus is still less. Moreover, all his jute is not ready for sale at the same time as harvesting takes place piecemeal with the result that ready supplies for marketing are erratic. Consequently, more jute is sold by growers in villages and primary markets than in secondary markets.*

So far as the diversity of weight is concerned it may be stated that diversity of weights makes it difficult, if not impossible, for the illiterate growers to compare the village prices with those prevailing in markets which might be based on a different standard. Besides, cultivators as a class and even *farias* and *beparis* reported that over-weighing was commonly practised by buyers in the markets.

It appears some items of expenditure have been left out from the above estimate. They are usually borne by the cultivators before they come to the cutting and bundling stage. The land has to be prepared by repeated ploughing at intervals. From local enquiry it is found that usually the land is ploughed eight or ten times before the seed is actually sown. A ploughman usually ploughs about one local *bigha* of land; it means that for an acre of land about 20 ploughs are required which will add to

Report on the Marketing and Transport of Jute in India, p. 107.

the expenditure of jute crop by Rs. 20 per acre. Secondly, the price of seed has also to be taken into account. The lowest price of seed reported in 1953 was four annas per seer at villages for both *capsularies* and *olitorius* seed. Some times, as much as Rs. 2 per seer was paid in localities where there was scarcity of seeds. But eight annas to one rupee per seer was the price ordinarily found in the bazar. Bazar seeds carry no guarantee of germination which is generally low. Enquiries revealed that rarely did more than 65 per cent of the ordinary bazar seeds, i.e., those preserved by growers themselves germinated. Government seeds were distributed through the Department of Agriculture and the prices were Rs. 1-2-0 for *capsularies* and Rs. 1-3-0 per seer for *olitorius**. Sowing rate per acre of land with village and bazar seed is reported to be 4 to 5 seers for *capsularies* and 3½ to 4 seers for *olitorius*. It is reported that the average price of seed for an acre will come to about Rs 5.

The cost of production also includes the expenses of weeding and harrowing operations. From local enquiry it appears that about 40 labourers are required for weeding operation and four for harrowing. Thus for an acre of land the average cultivator incurs Rs. 44 for weeding and harrowing operations.

Besides agricultural operational expenses the cultivator has also to pay rent for his land. The incidence of rent in Purnea per acre is about Rs. 2. So if we include all expenses the total amount of expenditure for an acre of land will come to near about Rs. 135-8-0

MARKETING.

When the jute has been washed, dried and bundled it is ready for sale, but growers generally store it for some time. They watch the trend of market prices and compare the offers made by various peripatetic dealers. In Purnea sales usually commence in August reaching the peak in November.

The Marketing Enquiry has established that the major portion of the marketable surplus of jute is sold by the growers in the villages. This fact is primarily responsible for the establishment of a chain of middlemen between the grower and the consumer. Apart from marketing proper, a middle man often performs certain allied or subsidiary functions as well. For example, he may undertake the cleaning and the subsequent sorting of the fibre. He generally provides transport as well as storage for jute for which he must invest some capital to finance

**Report on the Marketing and Transport of Jute in India*. 1957, pp 269-270.

these activities. Thus, the risks assumed by him in the course of his business are quite large. He may not succeed in selling at a price that will compensate him for his enterprise; for, the fibre may deteriorate, get damaged or be destroyed during the storage or transit. A middleman therefore, performs many functions, e.g., assembling, financing, storing, sorting, transportation, etc., which are rarely performed by the growers, but are inseparably bound up with the proper sale and distribution of jute fibre.*

The peripatetic dealers in Purnea are called *farias*, *paikars* and *beparis*. Many of them belong to the cultivating classes and take to casual type of jute trade as an additional source of income. They go from village to village making small purchases direct from the small cultivators. They collect the fibre from villages and the weekly *hats* and carry the jute to the assembling and baling stations. The important jute *mandis* (trade-centres) of the district are Forbesganj, Gulabbag and Kishanganj.

Arhatdar.—The *arhatdar* is a middleman operating between the sellers, growers and peripatetic dealers on the one hand and buyers, balers and mills on the other. Besides looking after the transport and assembling of the jute, the *arhatdar*'s main importance is in financing the *beparis* (small dealers) and in undertaking the storage of fibre. *Arhatdars* keep godowns or warehouses which are principally established at Kishanganj, Gulabbag and Forbesganj, Thakurganj, Barsoi, Kasba, Jalalgarh and Katihar, etc. Some of the *arhatdars* have their firms operating in different zones and there is a sort of tacit understanding between some groups of *arhatdars*.

The usefulness of *arhatdars* to local buyers lies in their constant touch with the sellers. They fill up a useful gap as it is not convenient or economic for the balers and the other big buyers to purchase small quantities of fibre available at the small markets directly offered by the growers. The *farias* and *beparis* require financial help in order to make purchases in the villages. The balers are generally not keen to lend money freely to such dealers. The *arhatdars* meet the finance and when they are financed by the *arhatdars*, the intermediaries are bound to take their fibre to the latter and not direct to the buyers.

Market Charges and Deductions.

The jute grower and the initial seller have to face a number of irksome and often inequitable market charges and deductions.

**Report on the Marketing and Transport of Jute in India, 1957, p. 95.*

Dhatta is a deduction in the weight of the stuff as a set off for the loss in weight in assorting, transportation, etc. At Gulabbagh and Forbesganj the rate of *dhatta* is 15 per cent and 5 per cent respectively in the weight of the stuff.

Keyals (weighmen) have their own way of weighing the stuff and the seller often finds his 5 maunds of jute weighing several seers less. Particular *keyals* in every jute centre have a notoriety.

Some of the other charges are *kharcha, dharamda* or *ishwar brithi* and *goshala*. '*Kharcha* is a small cash deducted from the price by the *katcha* balers as establishment expenses At Forbesganj the rate is eight annas per maund. A small deduction (usually two annas per cart-load of about 10 mds.) for the price is offset with the ostensible idea of utilizing the money for religious or charitable purposes (*dharamda*). Deductions are made for maintaining *pinjrapole* (institution for maintaining old and decrepit cows) which is locally known as *goshala*. At Kishanganj the rate is 3 pies per maund. Such deductions indicate the helplessness of the primary seller who has no financial stability.'

Credit Facilities for Growers

The Banks do not offer the necessary credit to the average grower who has to fall back on the professional money-lenders, richer agriculturists or the agents of the jute traders. The rate of interest is believed to be ranging higher than the statutory rate. Development of co-operative credit and warehouse facilities had been recommended by a committee that enquired some years back into the problem of rural credit Those agencies have not been able to supply the necessary credit. The issue of indebtedness and credit supply agencies has been discussed elsewhere.

Financing of Beparis and Farias.

Growers receive advances from *farias, beparis, arhatdars* or *katcha* balers. The latter get advances from other bigger *katcha* balers or *arhatdars*. *Arhatdars* or *katcha* balers have their own capital or are financed by Banks or other trade agencies. The transaction mainly moves on trust—the *bepari* or *faria* bringing in the fibre within a week or so against the advances In the text on Banking, the role of the banks has been discussed.

Baling.

Baling is done with hand or hydraulic presses worked with power to put the loose fibre into a compact size for proper handling and transportation. Usually the bales are of 3½ and 4 maunds.

JUTE MANUFACTURE.

Elsewhere there has been a discussion of the despatch of jute to the mill-centres outside Bihar. In Bihar there are only three jute mills, two at Katihar and one at Muktapur near Samastipur. The Katihar Jute Mill was started in 1934 while the R. B. H. M. Jute Mill was started in 1935. The mills run two shifts and employ about 5,000 workers each. The jute mills have been noticed in the Chapter on Industries.

PRESENT TRENDS

A particular feature of ute trade is that the fibre has to pass through many hands from the grower to the manufacturer and as each link will make some profit the grower is hard hit. The average jute cultivator cannot hold back and must sell the stuff within a few months of the fibre being ready. Only the big cultivator may hold back his stuff for a year or two if he has storing facility. There has been some relief afforded by warehousing sponsored by the State at Forbesganj, Gulabbagh and Katihar. But such warehouses have yet to be popular and bring little relief to the average small cultivator He has made up his mind to sell a little of his stuff for making purchases at the *hat* or the market and he would not take back the stuff if the price offered is low. He can ill-afford to go to the warehouse footing miles and take out a small quantity and sell. He does not want to move between the warehouse and the bank for an advance. He is, besides, probably over-burdened with advances and committed to sell at a particular price. He is more concerned with the sale that could be effected sitting by the roadside or at the *hat* or at the primary market. The buyer is hovering round him and naturally with his poor financial stability he stoops to sell to him even if he knows he could get a higher price elsewhere even including the transport and other incidental expenditure by that process. The secondary markets are for the small buyers and are located with good communication facilities. They are scattered all over the district. Forbesganj, Gulabbagh (Purnea), Kasba and Katihar are the chief secondary markets. Transaction at the secondary markets takes place on individual basis and there is no collective or secret bargaining nor is there any system of auctioning the fibre.

The present changes in jute in this district include better communication facilities, availability of public and private carriers for a quicker transport, no control on not selling to the jute mills within the district, no ear-marked zones for marketing and somewhat more facilities for storage and credit. But it

has to be noted that all this does not prosper the condition of the jute grower as the prices are ruled by conditions beyond the control of the jute grower or the jute merchants in this district Jute having a wider market the prices are controlled by the world factors and the future of the grower depends on a somewhat nebulous factor, namely control of factors with which he has nothing to do.

As indicated before the price of jute still depends mainly on the gamble of rain, the *phatka* market in Calcutta (dealings in future), world market for jute and availability of the stuff Many are of the opinion that the cartel in Calcutta rules the price It is being increasingly felt that there should be an extension of the area and cultivation of mesta to increase its yield as a safeguard against the shortage of jute It has been repeatedly indicated by the Centre that the goal is self-sufficiency in this vital raw material for a vital industry It cannot be said that there is no scope for improvement in regard to seed, fertilizer supplies and the treatment of jute after harvesting. The Agricultural Research Institute's successful preliminary efforts to evolve a cross between the two principal varieties of jute is a landmark and is bound to be improved upon. At present there is not much use of fertilizers whether due to lack of knowledge, want of availability or the economic condition of the grower. Both the State and the Centre are committed to the policy to increase the acreage under the jute crop and its output by distribution of improved seeds, use of fertilizers and application of improved practices

The danger of panicky speculation about the crop position has often led to hoarding and violent fluctuation of price. This fear percolates to the lowest strata.

Jute policy is also vitally associated with adjusting production to availability of raw jute so as to ensure supplies until the arrival of the new jute crop and to maintain the output of manufactured goods at a constant level. Both export and internal consumption have to be adjusted. The Union Government decided in December, 1960 to vest the Jute Commissioner under the Essential Commodities Act with statutory authority to requisition stock of raw jute and jute goods and to obtain all information for the purpose. It was, however, not the Government intention till then to requisition stocks from growers.

These are some of the reasons why the jute grower in Purnea is still leading an uneconomic existence while the stuff he produces is known as the golden fabric.

CHAPTER VII.

BANKING, TRADE AND COMMERCE.

HISTORY OF INDIGENOUS BANKING SYSTEM.

When the British came to Purnea near about 1771 they found the land alluvial, plentiful and the population sparse. Purnea seems to have been a surplus district so far as produce of rice was concerned. In a letter, dated 15th November, 1783, A. Cleveland, Collector of Bhagalpur, had requested S. G. Hyatle, Chief of Purnea for the supply of 20,000 maunds of rice for establishing granaries on the high roads for the use of troops and travellers.* This suggests that Purnea was a surplus district for rice.

INDEBTEDNESS.

But in spite of the rich agricultural resources and scarcity of population it appears that the incidence of indebtedness was high. According to Francis Buchanan "A large proportion of the farmers are in debt, chiefly to merchants of various kinds who make advances for their produce, silk, indigo, grain and butter".**

In 1877 about seven decades after the visit of Buchanan to Purnea, W.W. Hunter had observed "Indebtedness among the tenant class is almost universal. Debts are generally repaid in grain. Seed is sold to small farmers at excessive prices, and it is difficult for them to clear themselves off the lender's book, a chronic state of poverty results, which, however, seldom reaches the limit of actual destitution". The Collector says, "The Purnea *rayat* lives, and that is all. The profit of his labour eventually goes into the coffers of the lenders of money and grain. The great mass of the *rayats* of Purnea do not possess occupancy rights, but hold on short-term leases or no leases at all".† Regarding the tenancy system, Hunter mentioned "the Collector estimates that occupancy tenants do not form more than a quarter of the peasantry of the district", and as regards those having rents protected from enhancement under Act VIII of 1869, he would

*Muzaffarpur Old Records (published by Gazetteers' Revision Section, Bihar 1959, p. 36).

**Francis Buchanan's *Account of the District of Purnea* (1809-10) (Bihar and Orissa Research Society, Patna, 1928, p. 435).

†Hunter's *Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol. XV, 1877, p. 305.

say "that not more than one-fourth of the occupancy *rayats* come under this class". He is not aware that there are any small proprietors owning, occupying and cultivating their hereditary lands, without either a *zamindar* above them or a sub-holder or labourer under them. This remark applies both to the revenue-paying and revenue—free land in the district. A marked feature was the very low price of the agricultural products. Hunter had discussed this aspect and had mentioned that paddy was sold at a price of eight annas to twelve annas per maund (page 304). The cultivator, it appears, had only a marginal profit and was always on the verge of indebtedness. The cultivator might have earned a little by working as a labourer but that subsidiary income was very meagre and could be ignored.

The last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911) mentions that special enquiries regarding the condition of the people were made in 1888. It was found that the people were indolent and spiritless partly due to the unhealthy climate and partly owing to the lethargic habit of the people. Even the cultivators of the average income-group had to hire imported labourers from Saran, Shahabad, and Balia on high wages for doing hard manual work. The people of Purnea were described as home-sick, un-enterprising and indolent. It was mentioned that "The people of Purnea are for the most part wanting in effort to desire to improve themselves. They have learnt to be content with such things as they have; they will not even, when in want, accept good wages if it involves their leaving their homes and working a little more than they are accustomed to; hence their unwillingness to take work on the line, or to enter domestic service, or to emigrate to Darjeeling. This is commonly attributed to their prosperity, I fear this is not always the case......They indicate that if the condition of the people is not better, it is not due to their wanting opportunity but rather to their wanting inclination to improvement."* This lack of emigration is still a feature in Purnea district's economy.

Further enquiries regarding the material condition of the people were made along with the *Survey and Settlement Operations* (1901—1908). On an investigation it was concluded that the amount needed to keep an average family of 5.4 person in moderate comfort in a normal year would be about Rs. 100, and as that sum represented the profits on four acres of land, this area was taken to be a "subsistence holding". The average area held by *raiyats* was found to be 10 acres, and the net profit, after deducting rent, cess, etc., was calculated at Rs. 175 or Rs. 35

**District Gazetteer, Purnea* (1911), (pp. 113-114).

per head, which gave a good margin for the supply of other than the necessities of life. "With this margin", remarks Mr. Byrne, the Settlement Officer ih his report, "it is only natural to expect that the indebtedness of the Purnea cultivator is not very high. The only clue to it is that given by the amounts shown as advanced on mortgages with possession, in the return of the transfers of occupancy rights, since the only security ordinarily accepted for loans is a mortgage with possession. The total amount therein recorded is less than Rs. 95,000. The corresponding amount of recorded indebtedness was in Saran 50 lakhs; in Darbhanga, just under eight lakhs; in North Monghyr, under four lakhs; in Muzaffarpur, under five lakhs and in Champaran nearly 11 lakhs. Probably these figures give a better idea of the material condition of the peasantry in Purnea as compared with other districts than the elaborate empirical calculation of average income just indulged in. The consideration of average incomes alone is apt to lead to fallacious conclusions. The fact that the average income for the district is Rs. 35 offers but small consolation to a family whose average income per head is only ten rupees. The words of Mr. Stevenson Moore (*Muzaffarpur Final Report*, page 357, Chapter V), sum up the whole question admirably.

"The difficulty of forming an accurate estimate as to the material condition of the several classes of an alien, exclusive and suspicious people is considerable; but the difficulty of adducing convincing proof of the accuracy of the estimate is well nigh insuperable."*

The conclusion of Mr. Byrne, if correct, would indicate that the material condition of the cultivators of Purnea had improved; the incidence of indebtedness was less than that of the other districts of North Bihar. There was also a considerable increase in the price of the agricultural products. It appears that at Byrne's time paddy was sold at Rs. 3 per maund as against annas eight to twelve mentioned by Hunter.

But Byrne's conclusions should be taken with a caution. It may not be correct to come to a definite conclusion on the economic incidence of the cultivators from the incidence of mortgages alone. It is difficult even to assess loans as there were oral pledges for money taken, advances on standing crops, pledges

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**Final Report on Survey and Settlement Operation in the District of Purnea* (1901-08) by J. Byrne, I.C.S. (p. 122).

on ornaments, etc. Loans on documents are a later feature. The habit of litigation had not been as common as now and registered mortgages were not always insisted on. It would also appear that Byrne did not look into the cost of living comprehensively.

About two decades after, the Kosi Diara Survey and Settlement Operations were conducted (1923—26). As to indebtedness and material condition of the people the report mentioned that "On the whole the material condition of the *raiyats* is fairly satisfactory and the area is practically free from the likelihood of famine. There has been no year in which the *bhadoi, aghani* and *rabi* crops have all failed. Labour is plentiful and wages are fair The general run of *raiyats* cannot, however, be said to be prosperous and few of them are free from debt A co-operative society is required to keep them from the clutches of *mahajans*. Usufructuary mortgages are uncommon. Only 178 acres in thana Dhamdaha and 30 acres in thana Raniganj were so recorded. The average price was Rs 82 per acre in the former and Rs. 41 per acre in the latter. The transfers of occupancy holdings covered 3,411 acres at an average price of Rs. 48 per acre. Many of these transfers were of some years ago when the land was jungly and prices were low. The present price is not less than Rs. 90 per acre"* In his Settlement Report Byrne had mentioned that the average price of land by sale per acre was Rs. 24-4-10 and by mortgage Rs. 21-14-3 in Raniganj thana and by sale Rs. 14-4-5 and by mortgage Rs 15-8-9 in Dhamdaha thana.†

The Kosi-Diara Survey and Settlement (1923—26) was confined to 75 square miles only consisting of 40 villages in thana Dhamdaha in the Sadar subdivision and 14 villages in thana Raniganj in the Araria subdivision out of the total area of the district of 4,998 square miles consisting of four towns and 4,177 villages according to 1921 Census.

Mr. Nalinindra Lal Bose, the Settlement Officer in his report had questioned *"Are the average raiyats prosperous?"*, and his answer on the basis of the result of the crop-cutting experiment was in negative. He had drawn conclusion that price of the agricultural products had remained stationary but the cost of living had increased. He observed that "there cannot be the least doubt that the cost of living has increased by 50 per cent,

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**Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations of the Kosi Diara Area (1923—1926) in the district of Purnea* by Nalinindra Lal Bose, pp. 2-3.

†Appendix I (VIII), p. XIII.

if not more. So then an income of Rs. 150 is the absolute minimum on which a family of four adults or three adults and two minors can subsist Rs. 160 is the figure which I calculate for an ordinary subsistence, viz.—

		Rs.
Rs. 9 a month for diet		108
One tin of kerosene oil	. ..	4
Clothes two pairs per head at Rs. 4 a pair and Rs. 6 for garments, napkins, etc.	. ..	38
Tobacco, etc.	.. ..	10
	Total	160

The Revisional Survey and Settlement Operations were conducted in Purnea during 1952-60, but the final report has not yet been published. The data collected have not been made available. Since 1926, when Nalinindra Lal Bose had concluded his Settlement Operations there were a number of unprecedented external and internal events which produced profound changes. Purnea which was considered more or less a penal district of Bihar due to its insalubrious climate was badly affected by the Earthquake in 1934. Since the Earthquake, somehow the climate of the district began to improve and the improvement in climate brought in improvements in agriculture. After 1939 owing to the Second World War the price of agricultural products began to soar high and the economic condition of the agriculturists began to improve. Jute which is the main cash crop was in great demand in the war years and the price of jute soared very high bringing in a good dividend to the cultivators of jute, middlemen and other men connected with jute business. Besides several tenancy legislative amendments, viz., abolition of forced labour, commutation of produce rent into cash rent, the rent reduction operations, the Bakast Dispute Settlement Act, and the Bihar Land Reforms Act, etc., were taken by Government to improve the status of the tenants. The availability of jute and of labour encouraged the starting of jute mills within the district.

On a cursory investigation it has been found that the average cost of living has now risen by about 440 per cent since 1926 due

to high prices, lower purchase value of the rupee and the changes in the standard of living. It is held that the absolute minimum on which a cultivator family of four adults or three adults or two minors can subsist at least requires about Rs. 694 annually as against Rs. 160 in 1926 for an ordinary subsistence level other than his cultivation expenditure, viz.,—

		Rs.
(1)	Diet (rice, *dal*, etc.) about 30 mds. in quantity	450
(2)	Vegetables	25
(3)	Clothes two pairs per head and for garments, napkins, *lungi*, etc. ..	150
(4)	Tobacco, tea, etc.	30
(5)	Kerosene oil, two tins	14
(6)	Visits to fairs and *melas* which is a must in almost every family. ..	25
	Total ..	694

There are, of course, loopholes in the shape of unforeseen demands.

In the absence of a published report of the recent Survey Operations it is difficult to ascertain the average area of land held by a *raiyat*. Mr. Byrne in the last *Survey and Settlement Operations Report* (1901–08) had mentioned on the basis of his calculation that the average area held by a *raiyat* family was about 10 acres and the net profit after deducting rent, cess, etc., came to Rs. 175. The agricultural population during Byrne's time was 1,338,308. According to 1951 Census the agricultural population has risen to 2,234,553. The area of Purnea seems to have remained static as the total area mentioned by Mr. Byrne was 4,991 sq. miles as against 4,998 sq. miles in 1951 so the agricultural population since then has risen to about 165 per cent.

Thus according to this calculation the average number of a *raiyat* family of 10 acres of land would come to about 8 as against 5.4 persons mentioned by Mr. Byrne. The net profit after deducting necessary expenditure in 10 acres of land on the basis of the calculation given in the footnote will come to about

Rs. 1,519.* For these calculations the transfer of a portion of the district and the population to West Bengal in 1956 have not been taken into consideration.

The net profit in an average area of 10 acres of land thus comes to now Rs. 1,519†. Whereas according to the previous table a *raiyat* family of 8 persons will at least require annually Rs. 1,388 to meet only the ordinary expenses for the necessities of life. So an ordinary *raiyat* family of 8 persons on the basis of this calculation will be left with a small margin of Rs. 131 annually or Rs. 16 and 37 nP per head in a normal period to meet any emergency such as illness, scarcity and other expenses. Thus it is apparent that the material condition of an average ordinary cultivator is not satisfactory. The incidence of indebtedness, therefore, in the average cultivator family should normally be a marked feature. This fact is borne out by independent investigations at different places.

From all this we can safely draw the conclusion that there is enough scope for money-lending business in the district.

In the indigenous banking system the loans known as *dadani* or *agua*, *dereah*, *sudi* and *sudbharna* are pretty old and they are

*Average income Total area—10 acres.

Cultivable area—8 acres.

Area under different crops—

	Jute.	*Bhadai*, paddy and maize.	*Aghani* paddy.	Double crops	Total area sown.
	2½ acres	2½ acres.	3 acres	2½ acres	10½ acres.
Outturn (in mds.)	40	25	30	15	Total—110 mds
Value (in Rs.)	1,200	250	300	150	Total—Rs. 1,900

Average expenses—

	Rs.
Jute cultivation per acre about Rs. 60	150
Paddy cultivation per acre about Rs. 25	138
Rabi cultivation per acre about Rs. 25	63
	351
Rent, cess, etc.	30
Net profit Rs. 1,519	381

†This calculation has been made on the basis of crop outturn of 1959-60. The yield per acre for the year was fair and the price of jute had risen from Rs. 24 in 1958 to Rs. 30 to Rs. 35 in 1959-60.

still common in the district. A brief note on them will be useful.

Dadani *or* agua.—It is a loan advanced to the growers on condition of supply of their produce only in its repayment. The value of the produce is also determined by the money-lenders at the time of advance. The value, so fixed, comes to roughly 30 to 35 per cent less than the market value of the produce at the time of harvest.

Dereah.—This type of loan is generally given in kind. The term of its repayment is 1½ times of the quantity advanced. The period of repayment varies from four to six months. If the repayment is defaulted, the loanee has generally to give 2¼ times of the quantity originally taken in the next year. This type of loan is taken only when the people are in great necessity of loan.

Sudi.—It is a loan given in cash on *girwi* or pledge of ornaments, utensils, etc , as security. The rate of interest per annum is generally 50 to 75 per cent. This type of loan is taken by the people only when the other type of loan is not available. On non-payment of interest, the pledged goods can be sold if the *mahajans* think that the interest and principal together have reached the market value of the pledged goods.

Sudbharna.—*Sudbharna* or usufructuary mortgage is prevalent in the district. Besides usufructuary mortgage, sale-deeds are also executed for taking loans. In both the case, the loanee has to transfer his land to the creditor but in the former the transferee will possess the land so long the mortgage loan is not returned but in the sale deeds the right of occupancy is transferred for ever.

Credit Facilities Available in the District.

As observed before there has always been a good scope for the indigenous banking system in Purnea. We have seen that the *banias*, *mahajans* and *sahukars* were the normal money-lenders. They came either from the village or the neighbourhood. By the end of the eighteenth century the European planters who came here in the wake of the British occupation of the district began to advance money against the cultivation of indigo and the loan was collected either in cash or in crops at the time of the harvest. Francis Buchanan (1810), and the *Statistical Reporter* in 1877, were of the opinion that the relation between the *raiyats*, and the indigo planters (landlords) was on the whole satisfactory. "The most usual inducement, however", mentions Francis Buchanan "besides kindness of treatment,.... is the advance of money without interest. For every 20 *bighas*

which the farmer sows, according to Mr. Ellerton, this gentleman, before the cultivation begins, advances at least to the value of the average products of 26 *bighas*, and I am persuaded that the common rate of advance is still much higher. Had the farmer borrowed the money from a native merchant, and no one cultivated indigo that would not have been under the necessity of borrowing, he would have in the first place been obliged to repay the amount of the loan, in grain or other produce, at the low price given when the markets are glutted at harvest by which he would lose from 15 to 20 per cent. Secondly, in place of giving 40 *seers* for the *man* he must have given 50, which is an addition of 25 per cent, not only on the capital but on the interest, and if he fails in the delivery of any part, he takes the deficiency, in part of a loan for the next year at double its amount". This is also confirmed by Mr. Shillingford, of the house of Shillingfords who have been in Purnea for generations "The money we advance bears no interest during the season in which the advances are made."

It appears that the planters used to charge no interest on what was repaid with produce Some, however charged the interest of one per cent a month for what was not repaid. In his article on Purneah in *Calcutta Review* (1889), H. G. Cooke, District Magistrate, mentioned that the *raiyat* received an advance of two rupees a *bigha* for perhaps 10 *bighas*, and of his own accord sowed 20 or more *bighas* which proved that the *ryots* derived more profit from disposing of the indigo crop to the planter than from raising any other produce. Cooke also observed that he never had a complaint against the European planters and that "kindly and patriarchal relation" were maintained between the old Purneah planter families and the *ryots*.

From Hunter's *Statistical Account of Purniah* (1877) it appears that the rate of interest of the village money-lenders was very high Capital was employed by the larger merchants in the extension of their business; but since they were almost all non-residents they usually took very little interest for the improvement of land. The rate of interest on small loans, when the borrower pawned some article, such as on ornament or household vessel, was 37½ per cent per annum. When a mortgage was taken on house or land, the rate usually was 12 per cent per annum. "For pretty advance to the cultivator". Hunter has mentioned "the *mahajan* or money-lender makes the agreement, that after the harvest of a certain crop, or certain land, the sum

*Old *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911), p. 133.

**See Memoirs of a Bengal Civilian, John Beames (1961).

advanced is to be repaid in kind at a certain rate of interest per rupee, which is fixed according to the need of the borrower. Should the debtor fail to deliver the quantity of produce agreed upon, the interest due will be doubled in the following year, and so on. Thus very frequently the cultivators are irretrievably involved, and the money-lenders in time acquire rights in the land, which often are so widely extended as to raise them to the position of large landed proprietors. The only affluent bankers in the district are Rai Dhanpat Sinh and Rai Lakshmipat Sinh of Murshidabad, Babu Mahesh Lal and Babu Natched Lal, and Babu Taran Mall. Loans are chiefly conducted by the village grain merchants, and, to a small extent, by petty shopkeepers."*

State Advances.

State advances to cultivators have been a regular feature in the agricultural economy in the district since at least the days of Todarmal's revenue system introduced in 1582 A. D. The Revenue Officer was enjoined to assist the needy husbandmen with loans of money and receive payment at convenient periods. Todarmal had followed the policy of Shershah.

That system appears to have been continued and was a legacy in the early days of British administration. *Taccavi* loans were common during the days of Zaffir Khan, *Nazim* of Bengal, from 1713 to 1736. In 1767 two years after Clive had obtained for the Company, the *Diwani* of Bengal (States of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa), we find the first British Government of Bengal fully recognising the system of advances to the agriculturists.

When Shore was investigating into the rights of *zamindars* and *talukdars* in 1788 he made a specific enquiry regarding such advances. He had been told by Ghulam Hussain Khan, author of *Shair-ul-Mutakharin*, and the Roy Royan, that it was incumbent on the ruler to advance *taccavi* to the *raiyats*. This idea was incorporated in Regulation II of 1793. By sections 23 and 24 of the Regulation the Board was authorised "to treat advances of *taccavi* to proprietors or farmers of land where it shall appear essentially necessary, in proportion not exceeding 5 per cent of the revenue payable from the lands, the Government reporting all such instances to the Governor-General-in-Council. For larger

*Statistical Account of Purnea, p. 385. The rate of interest, now although sought to be controlled, is near about 12 to 20 per cent.

sums the Governor-General's sanction had to be obtained. The interest to be taken was one per cent per month and the Collectors were forbidden to advance *taccavi* without the express sanction of the Board".

Since then the advances by the State as a policy continued, although occasionally; the records show that they were not given extensively. In 1815 the Collectors of the ceded and conquered provinces had to report on the prevailing rent system. The replies given by the Collectors, however, indicated that there was a lesser instance of *taccavi* system. Probably the chief causes were the Company's indebtedness and the increasing difficulty of providing the annual remittance to England, the competition of the parallel system of advance to silk weavers and others.

After the stabilisation of the British administration since 1857, such advances have been one of the regular features of the agricultural economy. Loans are now regularly advanced under the Land Improvement Loans Act, 1883, the Agriculturists' Loans Act, 1884, and the Waste Land Reclamation Act, 1948.

The agencies for credit supply now are the Government, Co-operative Banks, Commercial Banks, relatives, agriculturist money-lenders, professional money-lenders, traders and commission agents, etc. Since there had been no recent rural and urban survey to ascertain the incidence of indebtedness in Purnea district, it is not possible to quote the correct figures of loan advanced by each agency. Recently the Research Department (Bombay) of the Reserve Bank of India has published a monograph of Monghyr in which the rural credit has been discussed.* Since the rural problems of Monghyr and Purnea are more or less similar, the findings of the monograph of Monghyr will be of some importance for Purnea also.

The monograph confirms that the role of the private money-lenders is still predominant in the rural areas. Loans from Government agencies and the Co-operative Banks form a very small percentage of the total borrowings. The monograph mentions that 49 per cent of the cultivating families resorted to professional money-lenders, who apparently supplied 79 per cent of cultivator's total borrowings. In the rural areas about 98 per cent of the total borrowings is met by the professional money-lenders, agriculturist money-lenders, relatives, traders and commission agents and landlords. The figures are given below

Monograph of Monghyr (All-India Rural Credit Survey), published in 1958.

and it may be said that they are broadly applicable to Purnea district also :—

Agency.		Proportion of borrowing from each agency to the total borrowing of cultivation.
Government	—	3.3 per cent.
Co-operative	—	3.1 per cent.
Relatives		14.2 per cent.
Agriculturist money-lenders	—	24.9 per cent.
Professional money-lenders		44.8 per cent.
Traders and commission agents	—	5.5 per cent.
Landlords	—	1.5 per cent.
Commercial Banks	—	0.9 per cent.
Others	—	1.8 per cent.

INDEBTEDNESS.

The incidence of indebtedness as discussed earlier is quite high in Purnea district. The majority of the cultivators are in debt. In order to ascertain the incidence of indebtedness, Mr. Byrne, the Settlement Officer (1901-08) had taken resort to the figures of mortgage deeds which have been given earlier. *The Bihar Statistical Handbook*, 1955, published by the Director of Economics and Statistics mentions the figures of total (compulsory and optional) registration affecting immovable and movable property in 1955 as follows*:—

Immovable property.			Movable property.		
Number.	Aggregate value.	Fees.	Number.	Aggregate value.	Fees.
	Rs.	Rs.		Rs.	Rs.
37,161	1,49,39,301	2,04,504	2,419	18,90,606	7,488

Bihar Statistical Hand-book, 1955, Tables 153, 155.

The figures of the other districts of North Bihar for the same year were as follows :—

District	Immovable property			Movable property		
—	Number.	Aggregate value	Fees	Number	Aggregate value	Fees
		Rs.	Rs.		Rs.	Rs
Saran ..	86,747	4,06,07,223	4,97,863	2,282	17,49,631	10,612
Champaran	55,419	2,44,41,621	3,08,271	1,190	6,40,524	3,734
Muzaffarpur ..	94,201	3,88,11,994	5,21,960	2,056	3,93,547	9,247
Darbhanga	80,650	2,82,71,742	3,98,698	1,461	6,23,605	4,735
Monghyr	47,036	2,56,59,168	3,08,398	841	4,63,725	2,590

The above statistics will show that the incidence of loans on mortgages is comparatively lower in Purnea district than the other districts of North Bihar. So it might be said that if mortgage statistics are any indicator, the observation made in the *Survey and Settlement Operations Report for Purnea* (1901—1908) that the incidence of debt is comparatively less in Purnea than the other districts of North Bihar still holds good.

The next source to suggest the incidence of indebtedness is the amount of loans advanced by the licensed money-lenders. *The Bihar Statistical Hand book*, 1955 has given the statement of the licenses registered for the first time during the year, the number of licenses at the end of the year and the amount of loan advanced under the Bihar Money-lenders Act for the year 1952-53 as follows :—

Number of licenses registered for the first time during the year		Number of licenses in force at the end of the year	
Urban.	Rural	Urban	Rural
41	143	445	1,079

Amount of loans advanced

With security.		Without security.		Total.
In urban areas.	In rural areas.	In urban areas.	In rural areas	
Rs	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1,83,109	2,72,110	87,037	2,81,774	8,26,020

The statistics may be compared with the collected figures of the last five years ending 1959-60 given below :—

Year.	Number of licenses registered for the first time during the year		Number of licenses in force at the end of the year.	
	Urban	Rural.	Urban	Rural.
1955-56	50	191	110	1,878
1956-57	47	125	101	1,900
1957-58	58	134	224	2,111
1958-59	69	173	173	2,162
1959-60	65	146	181	[illegible]

—	Amount of loan advanced with security.		Amount of loan advanced without security	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1955-56	2,53,461	3,22,836	1,89,675	28,95,461
1956-57	3,89,728	5,05,322	87,898	41,07,182
1957-58	5,46,250	29,34,226	3,17,479	[illegible]
1958-59	2,84,182	[illegible]	2,57,737	4,06,134
1959-60	16,55,125	29,85,743	1,88,7 3	[illegible]

As stated before, the State Government also advance loan under the Land Improvement Loans Act, 1883, the Agriculturists' Loans Act, 1884 and the Waste Land Reclamation Loans Act, 1918. After independence of the country, the loans by the State Government have become a regular feature and the incidence of amount advanced is comparatively high

The statement below will show the amount of loans advanced by the Government from 1950-51 to 1959-60 :—

Statement showing the outstanding amount advanced and collected and balance in respect of Land Improvement loans

Year	Amount outstanding.	Amount advanced.	Amount collected.	Balance	Remarks
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	
1950-51	2,00,323	1,59,097	10,900	3,49,390	
1951-52	3,49,390	1,00,000	9,000	4,40,390	
1952-53	4,40,390	45,260	14,542	4,71,108	
1953-54	4,71,108	50,000	20,704	5,00,404	
1954-55	5,00,404	76,419	6,823	5,70,000	
1955-56	5,70,000	61,736	56,280	5,75,451	
1956-57	5,75,451	29,150	83,013	5,21,558	
1957-58	5,21,558	20,000	17,435	5,24,123	
1958-59	5,24,123	48,000	32,056	5,40,067	
1959-60	5,40,667	27,525	46,549	5,21,643	

Statement showing the outstanding amount advanced and collected and balance in respect of Agriculturists' Loans Act XII of 1884.

Year.	Outstanding amount of the previous year.	Total amount advanced during the year.	Total.	Total amount collected during the year.	Balance left for collection.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1950-51	3,43,777	9,99,915	13,43,692	29,784	13,13,908
1951-52	13,13,908	23,75,200	36,89,108	1,43,804	35,45,304
1952-53	35,45,304	4,50,091	39,95,395	6,73,752	33,21,642
1953-54	33,21,642	3,78,704	37,00,346	3 80,160	33,19,886
1954-55	33,19,886	18,89,495	52,09,381	1,54,240	50,55,141
1955-56	50,55,141	14,28,928	64,84,069	2,64,291	62,19 778
1956-57	62,19,778	5,07,152	67,26,930	3,97,222	63,29,708
1957-58	63,29,708	28,00,070	91,29,778	39,100	90,90,677
1958-59	90,90,677	21,77,345	1,12,68,022	19,91,126	92,76,897
1959-60	92,76,896	1,17,810	93,94,706	2,34,372	91,60,3[illegible]3

Statement showing the outstanding amount advanced and balanced in respect of Natural Calamities Loans Act I of 1934.

Year.	Outstanding amount of the previous years.	Total amount advanced during the year.	Total	Total amount collected during the year.	Balance left for collection.
	Rs.	Rs	Rs.	Rs	Rs
1950-51	63,794	30,000	93,794	7,540	86,254
1951-52	86,254	46,500	1,32,754	8,190	1,24,564
1952-53	1,24,564	28,950	1,53,514	13,419	1,40,095
1953-54	1,40,095	24,060	1,64,155	9,865	1,54,290
1954-55	1,54,290	12,832	1,67,122	4,280	1,62,842
1955-56	1,62,842	39,338	2,02,180	3,048	1,99.13
1956-57	1,99,132	52,640	2,51,772	11,985	2,39,787
1957-58	2,39,787	82,220	3,22,007	3,166	3,18,841
1958-59	3,18,841	68,500	3,87,341	11,012	3,76,329
1959-60	3,76,329	70,811	4,47,140	14,946	4,32,193

Besides, Government through the agency of Co-operative Societies also advance loan to the people who are members of the Co-operative Societies. The amount of loan in respect of the three Central Co-operative Banks in Purnea in 1959 was Rs. 9,72,132 and in respect of the Primary Co-operative Societies Rs. 10,99,389.

The other credit supply agencies, viz., agriculturist money-lenders, relatives and other unlicensed money-lenders should not, however, be ignored. They supply a lot of capital in the rural areas. In Purnea verbal transaction of loan is commonly prevalent. Loans are generally taken on the pledge of standing crops, such as jute, sugarcane and paddy. This sort of loan is called *dadan* and *agua*, i.e., loan advanced to the growers on condition of supply of their produce in repayment. The value of the produce is determined by the money-lenders at the time of advance and this may be arbitrary. The price of the produce fixed usually comes to roughly 30 to 35 per cent less than the market value of the produce at the time of harvest. They also charge interest on the produce which varies from $\frac{1}{4}$th to $\frac{1}{2}$ *seer* per rupee per month. In this way the principal usually becomes almost double in a year. This sort of loan is normally taken by the small cultivators and the landless labourers.

Another type of produce loan is *deveah* or the term of repayment is $1\frac{1}{2}$ times of the quantity advanced. The period of repayment usually varies from four months to six months. If the repayment is defaulted, the loanee has to pay $2\frac{1}{4}$ times of the quantity originally taken in the next year.

Loan given in cash on pledge of ornaments, utensils, etc., is known as *sudi*. The rate of interest per annum is generally 50 to 75 per cent. On non-repayment of interest the pledged goods are sold if the *mahajan* thinks that the interest and principal combined together have become equal to the value of the pledged goods.

All this will indicate that the rate of interest in Purnea is rather exorbitant. The maxim "once in debt will be always in debt" is applicable. If per chance a person takes loan from a *mahajan* it would be difficult for him to liquidate the amount. In this district there are several Marwaris and Banias who are earning a lot due to money-lending business. They have palatial buildings in the midst of hutments of the cultivators.*

*Personal enquiries and random investigations have been made at the village Semapur, P.-S. Barari in Katihar subdivision, Thakurganj and Galgalia in Kishanganj subdivision regarding the rate of interest charged by the money lenders. From local enquiries it has been concluded that the money-lending business is common everywhere and earns a rich dividend for the creditor.

From local enquiry it is found that the majority of the cultivators are allergic to part with their lands if other sources for advance of loan are available That is why they commonly take loan on standing crops and freely pledge their ornaments The land of Purnea is less fertile than the other districts of North Bihar and so the *mahajan* does not want to take land. The price of land in Purnea is much lower than the other districts of North Bihar. That is why the debtor does not pledge his land on mortgage provided he can obtain loan from other sources. Our investigation indicates that the incidence of indebtedness in Purnea district is not as low as mentioned by Byrne in his *Final Report of the Settlement Operations in* 1901—1908

ROLL OF PRIVATE MONEY LENDERS AND FINANCIERS

Regarding the old financiers Francis Buchanan (1810-11) had mentioned as follows .—

"The bankers, who give bills of exchange for money, are called *kothiwalehs* There are seven houses at Puraniya, and one of these has an agent at Nathpur Two of the principals, the houses of Jagat Seth and Lala Meghraj, reside at Murshedabad The agents of these and Baidvanath of this district will both grant bills for money paid to them and will discount the bills of others The others, all natives of the district, deal only in former manner Their great profit lies in dealing with the landlords, keeping their rents, and discharging the taxes If large exchanges of gold and silver are required, they can only be procured from these *kothiwalehs* Jagat Seth's house will draw at once for 1,00,000 rupees The others will not exceed half that sum Jagat Seth and Meghraj do not deal with the *zamindars* The former will grant bills on any part of India, the others only on Calcutta, Dhaka, Murshedabad, and Patna

"The *surrafs* of this district exchange gold and silver, but do not deal in bills. They are entirely confined to the capital, and have stocks in trade of from 500 to 1,000 rupees They not only deal in exchange money, but purchase and sell wrought bullion. They are not, however, gold or silver smiths. One of them is a jeweller.

"The *fotdars*, who exchange *cowries* and silver, are here more usually called *surrafs*, and are not numerous

most of the shop-keepers giving change to those who purchase, and supply themselves with *cowries* from the hucksters who retail fish, greens and other trifling articles. Both classes of *surrafs* advance money to those who are living on monthly salaries or wages."*

W.W. Hunter as stated before had mentioned that "The only affluent bankers in the district are Rai Dhanpat Sinh and Rai Lakshmipat Sinh of Murshedabad, Babu Mahesh Lal and Babu Natched Lal, and Babu Laran Mall. Loans are chiefly conducted by the village grain merchants, and to small extent, by petty shop-keepers."†

Now the above mentioned old financier's families have disappeared principally due to the abolition of *zamindari*. Loans now are chiefly given by the village merchants, viz., Marwaris, Banias, *sahukars* and big cultivators.

As mentioned before the private money-lenders and financiers play an important role in supplying capital in the rural areas. However much one may look down upon the money-lenders and their methods, there is no doubt that in a preponderantly agricultural economy they do play an almost indispensable part. We have seen that Government, Co-operative Societies and Commercial Banks only touch the fringe of rural capital formation (i.e., only about 7 per cent) while the private money-lenders supply about 93 per cent of capital in the rural areas. The private money-lenders are quicker and do not always insist on securities like the other credit agencies, viz., Government and the Co-operative Societies. They advance money at the most critical season of agricultural operation and cut out the time lag, the formalities and often the harassment caused by the subordinate Government staff.

BANKS.

A branch of the Imperial Bank (now State Bank of India) was opened at Purnea, the district headquarters in 1925-26. The opening of the bank gave a great impetus to trade and financing of jute, mustard and tobacco business, which used to be done from Calcutta at considerable inconvenience and loss of time. Branches of the State Bank of India were opened at Forbesganj (1958) and at Kishanganj (1959). Branches have been opened at Katihar and Araria.

*An Account of Purnea (1809-10) by Francis Buchanan, Bihar Research Society, 1928, pp. 583-584.

† Hunter's *Statistical Account of Purniah*, p. 385.

Advances are made against gold ornaments to cultivators at a low rate of interest. Further advances at concessionary rate of interests are also granted to the co-operative marketing and processing societies against crops, to co-operative factories and small-scale industries against raw materials and receipts against the pledge of receipts.

The State Bank offers facility for keeping current accounts, savings bank accounts and fixed and short-term deposists The bank also offers other usual facilities regarding mercantile bills, foreign exchanges business over draft, loans and cash credit, etc

The Central Bank of India has its branches at Katihar, Forbesganj and Kishanganj The branches of the Central Bank of India mainly carry commercial business and advances are made to businessmen on security of the invoices of commercial goods, mainly against wheat, jute, oil seeds, oil, paddy, rice, other foodgrains, cotton and piece goods It is reported that although there is a provision to advance loans against agriculture and industry but nobody so far has taken loan for this purpose

The Katihar Branch of the Central Bank of India was opened in 1940. Advances which were made against commercial goods from 1955 to 1959 were as follows –

1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
Rs.	Rs.	Rs	Rs	Rs.
26,23,600	22,18,960	18,33,733	16,05,827	20,65,029

The Kishanganj Branch of the Central Bank of India was also opened in 1940 It is reported that the Kishanganj Branch usually collects bills of approximately one crore rupees in a year and over draft against agricultural products touches to eight to nine lakhs rupees during the seasonal period (October to March).

The Central Bank of India opened its branch at Forbesganj in 1941. It has made advance against agricultural products to the tune of Rs. 19,27,000 till 31st December, 1959.

A private bank at Thakurganj was started in 1929 under the Indian Companies Act by a group of business pioneers of the district, Sri Bireshwar Lahiri and Dr. K C. Lahiri and others. The said bank ran into voluntary liquidation in 1955 to avoid competition with the Central Co-operative Banks. The other private bank was started at Kishanganj much later known as the Kishanganj Bank, Ltd. This bank is still in existence but not much is known about its condition. The private bank at Thakurganj was a pioneer.

CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES.

The history of Co-operative movement in Purnea district begins from 1902 when the Purnea Central Bank was established. Two years later the Co-operative Societies Act X of 1904 was passed and the said bank was registered as the first Co-operative Society in the district. After the enactment of the Indian Co-operative Societies Act II of 1912, a full-fledged bank, the Purnea Central Co-operative Bank, Ltd., was registered and established in 1914. The jurisdiction of the newly started bank was confined to Purnea subdivision (at present both Purnea and Katihar subdivisions) but other subdivisions, viz., Araria and Kishanganj remained untapped. The Araria and Kishanganj Central Co-operative Banks were started in 1927 and 1929 respectively. These banks practically confined their activities mainly in lending money to agriculturist members but it could in no way meet the demand of rural credit. It is reported that till 1948 the number of primary society members in the whole district was not more than 300. During the post-reconstruction period from 1943 to 1948 the Government met the amount of deficit in running the banks.

Previously the Primary Credit Societies were registered with unlimited liability which was prejudicial in the interest of the illiterate agriculturists. In post-independence period the creation of the multi-purpose co-operative societies with limited liability was felt essential. An intensive drive was organised to start such societies from 1949. Instead of only lending money they started to distribute commodities, viz., cloth, sugar, kerosene oil, iron, fertilizers, etc., in their respective jurisdiction.

The following two tables show the assets of the three Central Banks and the Primary Co-operative Societies and give us some idea of the working of the Co-operative movement in the district:—

	In respect of Central Co-operative Banks	In respect of Primary Co-operative Societies.
	Rs.	Rs.
1. No. of members ..	1,050	41,757
2. Amount of paid-up Share Capital.	2,20,036	4,52,837
3. Amount of deposits ..	5,47,079	68,394
4. Amount of loan outstanding	9,27,132	10,99,389
5. Amount of Reserve Fund and other funds.	4,02,719	50,816
6. Amount of Working Capital .	14,72,971	10,40,557
7. Amount of loan advanced during 1958-59.	5,24,713	7,24,647

Primary Co-operative Credit Society.

		Number.
(a)	Multi-purpose Co-operative Societies	658
(b)	Agricultural Credit Societies	97
(c)	Large sized Multi purpose Co-operative Societies	10
(d)	Vyapar Mandal Sahyog Samiti (Marketing)	4
(e)	Harijan Kalyan Sahyog Samiti	1
(f)	Co-operative Stores	10
(g)	Weavers' Co-operative Societies	27
(h)	Canegrowers' Co-operative Societies	58
(i)	Fishermen's Co-operative Societies	15
(j)	Sarvodaya Sahyog Samiti	16
(k)	Joint Farming Co-operative Societies	5
(l)	Labour Co-operative Societies	7
(m)	Other Industrial Co-operative Societies	1
(n)	Processing Co-operative Societies	9
(o)	Dairy Farming Co-operative Societies	2
(p)	Palm Gur Producers' Co-operative Societies	2
(q)	Other Non-Agricultural Non-Credit Co-operative Societies.	5
(r)	Non-Agricultural Credit Co-operative Societies	1
(s)	Oilmen's Co-operative Societies	29

The number of the Co-operative Credit Societies cannot be an index of the progress made by Co-operative movement. They would not also by the number show that the people are becoming co-operative minded; without a proper appraisal it is not possible to say how far they are successful in their real objective. The large outstandings of loans would rather suggest that the members are more anxious to take loans.

Life Insurance Corporation.

The work of life insurance was done in the private sector before and was nationalised only recently. The Life Insurance Corporation of India in the public sector came into existence in Purnea with effect from 1st September, 1956. Prior to the formation of the Corporation, some of the leading insurance companies operating in the district were Hindustan Co-operative, New India, Oriental, Railway Co-operative, Laxami Insurance,

Hindu Mutual, Bombay Mutual, Prudential, Ministerial Co-operative, Police Co-operative, National Indian, National, Free Indian, Bombay Life and Metropolitan, etc. From local enquiry it is gathered that out of 263 insurance companies of India, nearly 50 companies were doing business in the district of Purnea. It is reported that the Hindustan Co-operative had a large clientele in the district and had its branch office at Purnea.

When the Life Insurance Corporation first came into being it had its branch office only at Purnea with jurisdiction on the entire area of Purnea district and also over the civil area of Saharsa district and some part of Nepal *Terai*. In 1958 another sub-branch office was established at Katihar. The Katihar sub-branch comprised of the Katihar subdivision and the Araria subdivision while Purnea sub-branch covered the Sadar and Kishanganj subdivisions. For administrative facility the area of Araria subdivision was transferred to Purnea sub-branch and Kishanganj subdivision to Katihar sub-branch in 1960. Both the branches are under the administrative control of the Divisional Office, Muzaffarpur.

The Life Insurance Corporation of the Purnea sub-branch is said to have written a total business amounting to Rs. 1.37 crores in 1957 in the areas of Purnea, Saharsa and Nepal *Terai*. Since no separate records were maintained for the district of Saharsa and Nepal *Terai* it is not possible to give an idea of the accurate volume of business carried in Purnea district only.

In 1958 a separate sub-branch at Katihar was established and Saharsa became an independent office but both the sub-branch offices, i.e., Purnea and Katihar operate in Nepal and some portions of West Dinajpur which was formerly a part of Purnea district. In 1958 the Katihar branch wrote a business of about 38 lakhs covering a risk of about 700 lives as against Rs. 62 lakhs covering a risk of about 1,600 lives in 1959. So far as Purnea sub-branch office is concerned it completed a business of about Rs. 67 lakhs in 1958 as against Rs. 57 lakhs in 1959.

The population of the district is mainly rural and not educated. Their marginal level of subsistence makes it all the more necessary that the benefits of life insurance should be extended to them. Insurance work so far has been confined to the urban areas only. There is ample scope for insurance work in the rural areas.

General Insurance.

General insurance is not covered by the Life Insurance Corporation. The main concern working is the Hindustan

General Insurance Society which has its branch office at Katihar from January, 1958. It under-writes all sorts of general insurance such as fire, burglary, accident, machinery break-down, riot, earthquake, motor, personal accident, workmen's compensation, marine (transit by road, country boat, railway, etc.), cash in transit and cash in safe. For administrative purpose the Katihar branch office is under the charge of a Branch Secretary. There are Inspectors at Kishanganj, Kasba, Biratnagar (Nepal) Murliganj (Saharsa), Raniganj and Malda in West Bengal. Thus the Katihar office has jurisdiction over not only on the whole of Purnea district but also on Saharsa district and portions of West Bengal and Nepal. This office is under the control of the Divisional Office, Patna.

Since the General Insurance Society has recently been established in Purnea it has not made much headway. The volume of business written till 1959 was as follows:—

	Rs.
Fire Insurance	1,60,000
Motor Insurance	40,000
Marine and Miscellaneous	50,000
Total	2,50,000

Fire insurance premiums mostly come from banks, godowns, shops and residential houses. This is the only branch office in North Bihar on this side of Ganga between Patna and Jalpaiguri in West Bengal.

The coverage cannot be said to be adequate in consideration of the fact that jute, the main cash-crop of the district, is highly inflammable. Some of the godowns only are insured under this scheme but not the small stocks in the hands of the big cultivators and small traders.

Trade and Commerce.

Course of Trade.

It may be repeated that Purnea is essentially an agricultural district. It has an ideal moist climate and low-lying swamps that are suitable for the cultivation of jute and rice and pisciculture. Purnea had immense stretches of pasture lands before. Even now there are vast stretches of pasturage where hundreds of cattle from other districts are brought for grazing. This has led to a good business of *ghee*.

Purnea is contiguous to West Bengal and Nepal, besides some other districts of Bihar. Purnea has been known to be a surplus district so far as the cultivation of rice is concerned. Purnea is the largest jute-producing district in India.

The availability of jute in abundance has naturally sponsored the starting of two jute mills at Katihar for the manufacture of raw jute. At Kishanganj there are some mills for pressing jute into bales. Rice mills, big and small, are scattered all over the district.

It has to be mentioned that besides the manufacture of jute and milling of rice, *dal,* etc., there are no other main industries in the district. There are no minerals or forest produce. An attempt to start a match factory was abandoned. A sugar mill near Katihar had to close down. The idea of starting a sugar mill at Banmankhi has been in the air for several years now. No one has thought of starting a modern dairy in spite of the possibility of a good supply of milk. As coal, steel, cement, etc., the main help for the starting of industries have all to be imported at great cost, the difficulty in starting industries is appreciable. It is, however, a noteworthy feature that in spite of these initial difficulties Katihar has been industrialised to some extent.

Cottage industries have also not made much advance in this district. The district has to depend on imports for most of the essential commodities including consumers' goods. While Purnea exports mainly grains, jute and fish, she has to import practically all her other requirements as her internal output for necessities of life is rather poor.

Purnea's trade and commerce are also connected with her geographical position. Purnea is essentially a border district. It is bounded on the north by the Morung *zila* of Nepal and by the Darjeeling district; on the east by the districts of Jalpaiguri, Dinajpur and Malda (West Bengal); on the south by river Ganga, which separates it from Bhagalpur and Santhal Parganas, and on the west by Saharsa district.

Purnea had close commercial relations with the border areas and with Nepal from time immemorial. The rivers and the frontier road on the foot hills of Nepal have been the main trade routes. It appears that a considerable turnover of trade has always passed to and from the hill passes of Nepal and Purnea. In the past, the rivers had played a great part in connecting Purnea with the trade centres of Lower Bengal and of Bihar like Bhagalpur, Sahibganj, Rajmahal and Patna, the capital of Bihar.

The *melas* and *hats* of the district have been responsible for facilitating trade and commerce, both internal and external and some of them have been in existence even before the advent of British. The *melas* and *hats* were very necessary when communications were bad and have continued in importance even when communications have improved.

The *Rizazu-s-salatin* (1788) has mentioned that Karhagola on the bank of the river Ganga was the resort of traders and *mahajans* from various places.

In the 19th and early 20th century the rivers were the main routes for carrying trade and commerce. Francis Buchanan in 1810 had mentioned that the rivers Ganga, Kosi and Mahananda were navigable almost throughout the year and a considerable amount of trade was carried on through these rivers. Boats of larger size with considerable burden plied regularly on these three rivers.

After Buchanan, W.W. Hunter in his *Statistical Account of Bengal for Purniah* (1877) had given more details of the river borne traffic. Hunter had mentioned that from September, 1875 the boat registration system had been established on all the waterways of Bengal and the results published monthly in the *Statistical Reporter*. From the statistics of six months ending February 1876, "it appears that the total of exports during the half year, in class I (articles registered by weight only), amounted to 516,383 *mans* or 18,903 tons; of which mustard-seed contributed 35 per cent; jute, 18 per cent; wheat, 9 per cent; linseed, 6 per cent; and tobacco, 6 per cent. The total of the imports in the same class was 259,321 *mans* or 9,493 tons; of which salt formed 42 per cent; saltpetre, 8 per cent; pulses and gram, 5 per cent; and the other saline substances, 4 per cent. The weight of the exports, therefore, exceeded that of the imports by 257,062 *mans* or just twofold. Under class II (articles registered by number only), the most noticeable items are 131,810 gunny-bags, exported in the months of September and December; and 269,500 bundles of hay and straw, exported in October and January. In class II (articles registered by value only), the exports were valued at Rs. 46,832 (£4,683-4s-0d), of which European cotton goods formed 38 per cent, all in February; and miscellaneous native goods, 23 per cent. The imports in this class reached Rs. 2,39,181 (£23,918–2s-0d), or five times the value of the exports; European cotton goods made up 48 per cent; native cotton goods, 21 per cent; and miscellaneous native goods, 19 per cent of the total.

"From the returns obtained at the several registration stations, which are also published in the *Statistical Reporter*, it may be gathered that the trade of Purniah, as might be expected, is mainly confined to Lower Bengal. Out of the total of exports in class I, only 3 per cent was sent towards Patna. Of the total imports in the same class, 23 per cent was received from the direction of Patna, and 2 per cent was registered at Darauli * on the Ghagra.

"With regard to particular staples of trade, the *Statistical Reporter* furnishes the following details showing the course of trade and the chief local marts. During the four months November, 1875 to February, 1876, the total exports of jute were 88,232 *mans*, steadily increasing month by month. Of this total, only 21,944 *mans*, or about one-fourth, went direct by boat to Calcutta, and the remainder was apparently diverted to the railways at Sahibganj, and other stations. During the two months of January and February, it was ascertained that 4,744 *mans* of jute from Purniah thus left the river at Kushtia. For those same two months the marts that exported jute to Calcutta and Kushtia may be arranged in the following order.—Dulalganj, 6,573 *mans*; Nawabganj, 1,286; Barmi, 1,177; Krishnaganj, 1,070; Raniganj, 718; Dewang, 313. With the exception of large exports of wheat, diminishing from September month by month, the trade of Purniah in foodgrains is insignificant. The export of oil-seeds is large, especially of mustard-seed. The following particulars can be given for the single month of December.—Total linseed exported, 1,819 *mans*, from the marts of Nawabganj (1,508 *mans*) and Raniganj (1,337); total mustard-seed exported, 34,003 *mans*, from the marts of Bhawanipur (6,775 *mans*), Karagola (4,956), Nawabganj (4,931), Demarkiti (4,726), Raniganj (3,999), Ekamba (1,510), Dulalganj (1,380). A considerable proportion of this export of oil-seed is sent across the Ganga to Sahibganj for rail transport. The trade in tobacco may be thus analysed for the same month of December : Total exports, 4,384 *mans*; of which 1,263 *mans* were consigned direct to Calcutta, and 1,137 to Hugli; the exporting marts were Karagola (1,97[illegible] *mans*), Dulalganj (1,07[illegible]), Charakpara (535) : Purnea town imported 333 *mans*. In the same month, Purnea town exported 3,287 *mans* of wheat. The trade in Manchester piecegoods may be thus analysed for the three months December to February: Imports, Rs. 1,08,10[illegible]; exports, Rs. 17,500. The importing marts were Karagola (Rs. 98,759), and Bhawaniganj, Kamalpur, and Nawabganj

*Darauli in Saran district then commanded great commercial importance due to river-borne traffic.

(Rs. 1,600 each). The supply was almost entirely derived from Sahibganj in the Santhal Parganas. In the month of January, Karagola received Rs. 67,300 from that source, and Rs. 10,400 in February; but in the latter month, Karagola despatched Rs 15,200 to Sahibganj, and Rs. 800 to Hayatpur in Maldah, an exceptional re-export, which must be attributed to over-trading. In November, the importation of native-made cotton cloth amounted to Rs. 16,632 of which Kantanagar received Rs 13,800 and Raniganj Rs. 2,500."*

It appears that by the end of nineteenth century owing to the opening and expansion of railways, the importance of river-borne traffic had naturally dwindled to a great extent Some of the branches of Kosi had changed their course and some streams got choked as well Byrne in his *Settlement Report* (1901 - 1908) had mentioned that the river-borne traffic had largely fallen off He mentioned as follows :—

> "With the advent of railways this traffic has largely fallen off Still a certain number of boats ply on the Dhamdaha Kosi and take grain (chiefly mustard-seeds) to Sahibganj for the Ganges river steamers Boats formerly plied on the Mahananda up as far as Kaliaganj and followed it down through Malda to the Ganges. Now they prefer to transfer their cargoes to the railways at Dalkhola or Barsoi junction."

The River Steam Navigation concern ran their steamers carrying passengers and cargo by the Ganga river for decades and Karagola was an important station But the opening of the railways meant a decrease of the importance of the steamer service. But the expansion of railways, however, could not possibly stamp out trade through waterways They have their great potentiality even now. Recently in 1959 a survey was conducted by the National Council for the Applied Economics Research, New Delhi and it was found that the rivers Ganga and Gaghra have great potentiality for the river-borne traffic in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal. It was found that "with the mounting pace of industrialisation in Bihar, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh regions bordering the Ganga, Bihar will continue to be the transport cushion for rail and road transit traffic to Uttar Pradesh, Assam and Nepal and if both road and rail routes in Bihar get congested and clogged, the escape will be by river".

*Hunter's *Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol. XV (1877), pp. 378, 379-380.

The unpublished reports of the Ganga Traffic Survey in the district of Purnea confirm that a good deal of trade is still carried on by the rivers Ganga and Kosi. The important *ghats* on the banks of the river Ganga in Purnea are Manihari *ghat* and Karagola *ghat*. The volume of traffic of Manihari *ghat* and Karagola *ghat* in 1957-58 was as follows :—

Manihari ghat.

Commodities.	Exports (in maunds).	Imports (in maunds).
Rice	..	6 lakhs.
Wheat	..	24 lakhs.
Potato	..	60,000
Pulse	5 lakhs	..
Vegetable oil	..	4 lakhs.
Jaggery	..	25,000
Mangoes and fruits	..	2 lakhs.
Stone chips	..	10 lakhs.
Kerosine oil	..	6 lakh tins.
Coal	..	25,000
Fertilizers	..	2½ lakhs.
Iron and steel	..	4 lakhs.
Salt	..	6 lakhs.
Finished *biri*	..	60,000 packets (25,000 *biris*).
Jute	..	35 lakhs.
Oil-seeds	..	2 lakhs.
Orange	..	3 lakhs.
Fresh vegetable	.	2 lakhs.

Karagola ghat.

Commodities.	Exports (in maunds).	Imports (in maunds).
Jute	15,00,000	..
Tobacco	50,000	..
Maize	50,000	..
Chillis	10,000	5,000
Rice	..	30,000
Wheat	..	10,000
Sugar	..	5,000
Jaggery	..	10,000
Salt	..	90,000
Gram	..	35,000
Pulses	..	15,000
Oil	..	60,000
Oil-seeds	..	10,000
Onion	..	10,000
Potato	..	20,000
Tea	..	100 lbs.*

*These figures have been collected from the Purnea Collectorate Office (Ganga Traffic Survey file—M. 212/59).

Manihari *ghat* is well served by a steamer service and boats. There is a steamer service of a private concern Roy & Co., Sakrigali. The Eastern Railway run their steamers to connect the railways between Sakrigali and Manihari station. After the creation of Pakistan this railway route is the only connecting link with Darjeeling by the railways. The number of boats at Manihari *ghat* is about 200 with the tonnage capacity of 2,000. These boats anchor at Manihari *ghat* or its nearby *ghats*, viz., Baijnathpur, Mahespur, Bahgar, Topra, Rampur and Gopalpur. The private steamer service and boats ply to and from between Manihari *ghat* and Sakrigali *ghat*, Sahibganj *ghat*, Maharajpur *ghat* and Colgong *ghat*. Passenger traffic at Manihari *ghat* is also large. The obstacles which stand in the way of a larger turnover of goods at this *ghat* are the want of metalled road between Manihari and Katihar, restricted railway goods booking facilities at Manihari *ghat* and want of proper Government or private warehouses on the *ghat*. There is a private godown of thatched hut with a capacity of one lakh maunds but this is not sufficient to cope with the situation. For want of proper maintenance of the river channel, the course of the river is ever shifting which also hampers the expansion of the business through the *ghat* at Manihari which is still in a pretty primitive condition.

Karagola *ghat* is the terminus of the Ganga Darjeeling metalled road. Goods from Calcutta are regularly booked from Calcutta through trucks by several road transport agencies in the private sector, and carried by swift-moving trucks up to Siliguri and different places of Purnea district such as Purnea, Katihar, Kishanganj, Forbesganj, Jogbani and Biratnagar in Nepal. Goods booked through these road agencies are crossed in the Ganga by country boats. For want of metalled road between Manihari and Katihar the loaded trucks have to cover a longer route of about 150 miles for crossing the Ganga at Karagola *ghat* and then go to Purnea and its different places. This distance can be shortened if there would have been a metalled road between Manihari and Katihar. Besides, transport cost and time-lag will also be considerably shortened if trucks from Calcutta instead of going to Karagola *ghat* pass through Manihari *ghat* and Katihar.

Transhipment of goods at Karagola *ghat* is carried by the country boats, the number of which is about 350. The loading capacity of the boats is from 500 maunds to 2,500 maunds. The chief articles of imports at Karagola *ghat* are the machinery parts, medicines, parts of motor and cycle, buckets and tube-wells. These goods are sent from Calcutta by road. Transhipment is

very quick at Karagola *ghat* due to the availability of large number of country boats. There is a spirit of mutual co-operation and co-ordination between the road transport companies and the owners of boats. Some of the obstacles for a proper expansion of the Karagola *ghat* are similar to that of Manihari *ghat*. Karagola *ghat* has one advantage. It has a metalled road from Karagola *ghat* to Darjeeling (Ganga-Darjeeling Road).

The main mode of conveyance for exports and imports of goods is now railways. The total mileage of railway in Purnea district is now 280. Some of the railway stations of the district, namely, Katihar, Purnea Junction, Karagola, Forbesganj, Jogbani, Barsoi, Kishanganj, Banmankhi and Galgalia are very important and their volume of both inward and outward traffic of goods is very large Some details of inward and outward traffic of goods have been given in the chapter on Communications.

The road traffic of the district is also very large. In the past, the condition of the roads and culverts was bad and that is why for a long period the Purnea District Board did not give licences either for bus and public carrier services. But it appears from the *Bihar Land Revenue Administration Report*, 1928-29, that the number of bus and public carriers began to increase resulting in a considerable damage to District Board roads. Though the road services began to increase from 1928-29 but still for long there had not been great expansion in bus and truck services due to the weak culverts on the District Board roads. It is only after 1948 that the Public Works Department took up the roads in the district and the expansion of metalled roads by the Public Works Department diverted a considerable amount of trade through the roads. The enormous increase of the public carrier trucks both inside and outside the district had facilitated the trade and commerce to a large extent. They shift the commodities quicker. Quick movement of mercantile goods particularly jute is very important. Details of the role played by the rail and roads for developing trade and commerce have been given in chapter on Communications.

Imports and Exports.

Francis Buchanan had discussed at length regarding exports and imports of Purnea. He had mentioned the fairs as the trade links between the two neighbouring districts of Purnea and Bhagalpur. These fairs were held on the banks of the river Ganga where cattle and goods were sold. He had found close

commercial intercourse between the trade centres of Purnea with places like Murshidabad, Dinajpur, Patna, Bhagalpur and the areas of Nepal and Bhutan. Rice, wheat and pulse were the important commodities for export and used to be sent to Murshidabad, Patna, Bhotan, etc.

Buchanan further mentioned that oil-seeds and tobacco were also exported, the former was mostly sent to Murshidabad and the latter to Morang, Murshidabad and Dinajpur. Oil was sent to Bhagalpur and Murshidabad.

Turmeric and ginger were sent to Murshidabad and Calcutta. A little of both was brought from Patna. A large share of the ginger was brought from Morang. Spices and paints were sold by *pasaries* or druggists.

They were as follows :—

Spices, including the black pepper, small cardamoms of Malabar, cloves, nutmeg, mace and cinnamon, camphor, asafoetida, etc., paints—vermilion, yellow cinnabar, blue and green vitriols, verdigris, rouge for ladies' feet and hands (*alta*), *peuri*, red starch of zedoary root (*abir*), white lead and chalk, quicksilver, tin-leaf and sandal-wood. All these were imported from Murshidabad

Seed of ajoyan (coriander), *mauri, jira, kalajira* (*Nigella sativa*), *methi, papita,* long pepper and *isufgol* (*plantago*), a little of these were imported from Tirahut (Tirhut).

Leaves and bark of the Nepal cinnamon (*tejpat*) and medicinal herbs chiefly came from the territory of Nepal. Almost the whole of these were again exported to Murshidabad, but a little went to Patna and a little was consumed in the district.

Regarding timber, Buchanan mentioned that timber used to be brought from the forests of Nepal mostly dealt by the *Kathiya mahajans* who resided in Dimiya and Mitiyari near the bank of the Kosi. It is said that about 35 merchants of the two places dealt in timber and each had a transaction of thousand rupees.

Regarding the persons who conducted commerce he had mentioned that "the persons who export and import goods from this district, besides the servants of the company, are of the following descriptions :—

Goldar Mahajans, or wealthy men who keep stores are here reckoned of two kinds—*Gharla* or *Bhusi*

> *Mahajans* who ought properly to deal in grain alone; and *Keranas*, who deal in salt, betel-nut, sack cloth, prepared butter, extract of sugarcane, and iron—but it is only in the capital that this distinction is observed. On other places the *Gharla Mahajans* deal in every kind of grain except rice, but in general they have not a capital sufficient to entitle them to the appellation of *Mahajan*, and are classed among the *paikars* or petty dealers."

From Buchanan's account it appears that the majority of the merchants were non-residents of the district. Silk, jewels, grains, cotton were more in the hands of non-resident traders The timber merchants were mostly native of the district. Buchanan describes the foreign merchants as the *Bhasaniya Mahajans* (floating merchants) who had captured the very considerable share of the trade. It appears that in his time there were particular sections who dealt in specific commodities like fish, mangoes, cattle, etc.

After Francis Buchanan, W. W. Hunter in 1877 in his *Statistical Account of Bengal for Purniah* had mentioned about exports and imports of the district. By this time a good number of non-official Europeans had settled down in the district and had extended indigo cultivation and indigo had become the most important industry in Purnea. In an average year, the outturn of indigo was estimated at 5,000 to 7,000 maunds of dye; area of land under indigo 6,000 to 7,000 acres. There were 34 factories with 31 subsidiary works of which only 3 were owned and managed by the natives.*

Regarding commerce Hunter had mentioned as follows:—

> "The cheap articles of trade in Purniah are rice, oil-seeds, indigo, jute, tobacco, hides and fish. The principal seats of commerce are Kasba and Ekmba, in *pargana* Haveli Purniah; Dulalganj, in *pargana* Sripur; Krishnaganj, in *pargana* Sultanpur; Raniganj, on the Panana, in *pargana* Badaur; Nawabganj, in *pargana* Kankjol, and the head quarters town of Purniah. The trade is carried on mainly by permanent markets, but there are also large fairs held at Karagola in November and February; at Ekmba in February; and at Nekmard, a little beyond the eastern boundary in Dinajpur, also in February. Scarcely any manufactures are

**Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. XI, p. 328.

exported except gunny and indigo. Agricultural products, such as paddy, jute, tobacco, oil-seeds, and also dried fish and hides, form the cheap staples of the export trade. In return for these, piece-goods, spices, drugs, and brass and ironware are largely imported. The trade of the entire Bhagalpur Division is chiefly in the hands of Bengalees from the neighbourhood of Calcutta. The number of up-country traders is proportionately very small. The exports and imports generally pass to and from the metropolis and the neighbouring marts. The former greatly outbalance the latter; and this fact alone supports the view generally held, that owing to an influx of money the peasantry are becoming well-to-do and contented."*

A comparative study of the accounts of Francis Buchanan and W.W. Hunter will show that there had been no wide change in the commodities of exports and imports. The Indigo trade seems to have made a great headway during Hunter's time. Jute which did not find place in the account of Buchanan had a large turnover in Hunter's time.

Practically there had been no change in the commercial commodities of exports and imports from Hunter's time, which will be evident from the following statement made by O'Malley in the old *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911):—

"The trade of Purnea is divisible into two parts, that with Nepal and that with British districts. The principal imports from Nepal are rice and paddy, jute, gunny bags and mustard-seed, while the principal exports to Nepal are salt, sugar, kerosene oil, dried fish, cotton twist and piece-goods. Much of the trade with Nepal represents a through trade. To other British districts Purnea exports rice and foodgrains, jute, oil-seeds, indigo, hides, dried fish and tobacco. The chief imports are rice and paddy (chiefly from Dinajpur), foodgrains, sugar, salt, European piece-goods, kerosene oil, gunny bags (from Calcutta) and coal. It will be observed that the exports consist almost entirely of agricultural produce, Purnea having few manufactured goods to export. The chief mode of carriage is by rail, the river steamers and country boats dealing with a comparatively small amount of traffic."

*Statistical Account of Purnea, p. 371.

The present trend of exports and imports is practically the same except indigo which has now entirely disappeared not only from Purnea but from Bihar. The synthetic dye invented by the Germans in the second decade of the present century caused a great depression in indigo trade and after the First World War, the synthetic dye practically captured the trade markets of the World. By 1925 the indigo cultivation had entirely disappeared from North Bihar.

The chief commodities for exports are now jute, paddy, rice, maize, mustard-seed, tobacco, bamboos, timbers, gunny bags and hides. Timbers and bamboos come from the forests of Nepal. The commodities for imports are cloth, salt, kerosene oil, vegetable oil, sugar, cement, lime and other manufactured goods. Since Purnea has no manufacturing industry it has to depend on imported manufactured goods.

Inter-district exports and imports of foodgrains seem to have a large turnover. Paddy is grown extensively in the north and eastern parts of the district while maize in the west. The rice-growing areas are mainly Forbesganj, Palasi, Narpatganj, Araria, Kishanganj, Bahadurganj, Thakurganj and Terhagachh police-stations while maize is grown in *thanas* Dhamdaha, Rupauli, Dharara and Korha. A large quantity of maize comes from Bihariganj and Murliganj in the Saharsa district. It is said that a good deal of rice and maize are mutually exchanged between the north-east and western parts of the district respectively. In this way a good deal of foodgrains are consumed in the district. Now Purnea exports no foodgrains. Kursela exports a large quantity of fish daily.

Trade centres.

The principal seats of trade during Hunter's time as stated before were Kasba, Ekmba, Dulalganj, Krishnaganj (Kishanganj), Raniganj, Nawabganj and Purnea, the headquarters of the district. By the time of the publication of the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea in* 1911, Ekmba, Dulalganj and Nawabganj appear to have lost their importance as principal seats of trade.

Regarding the trade centres the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* mentions as follows:—

"The chief centres of trade are Barsoi, Forbesganj, Kasba, Katihar, Kharkhari, Kishanganj, Purnea and Raniganj--all, with the exception of Raniganj and Kharkhari, situated on the railway. The most important of these entrepots is Kasba, 8 miles north

of Purnea, where several Marwari firms and Messrs. Ralli Brothers have agents, who deal in jute, grain and hides. Kishanganj is another mart the importance of which has been steadily growing of late years, large firms having established themselves there for sorting and baling the jute brought in from the Bahadurganj and Kishanganj *thanas*."

The abovementioned places continue as the trade centres of Purnea. But now the determining factors of the principal seat of trade of a place are the availability of electric power for development of industries, means of communications for exports and imports of commercial goods, the geographical position and population. So far as industry is concerned the district is still undeveloped. The chief commercial commodity of the district is jute, the main determining factor of the centre of trade. The wholesale *mandis* of jute are at Forbesganj, Kishanganj, Gulabbagh in Purnea and at Katihar. They are now the principal seats of trade.

From local enquiry it appears that the Kishanganj and Forbesganj *mandis* which are in the centre of the jute-growing areas of Kishanganj subdivision and Araria subdivision, handle approximately twelve to fifteen lakh maunds annually. The newly started Gulabbagh *mandi* handles about ten to twelve lakh maunds annually. The main feeder of this *mandi* are the weekly *hats* started by Raja P.C. Lal of Nazarganj in 1919 which are held on Tuesdays and Fridays.

Katihar's importance as a trade centre is chiefly due to one of the main railway stations of the North-East Frontier Railway. The opening of the Assam Link Railway had increased the importance of Katihar. The expansion of the railway brought great increase in railway population and increase in population naturally increases the volume of the trade of Katihar. Besides Katihar has now become the headquarters of the new Katihar subdivision from 1954 and it has also facilities for higher and secondary education which also gave great impetus to the existing trades. In Katihar there are two jute mills which consume about three lakh maunds of raw jute and give employment to about 3,000 labourers. The jute *arhats* of Katihar annually handle about 2,50,000 maunds of jute. There is also an *arhat* for fish which exports about on average 75 maunds of fish daily. The cloth market of Katihar is important in the district and has a great turnover.

The other trade centres, viz., Barsoi, Kasba and Kharkhari continue to be commercial centres of the district. Raniganj

which was considered to be an important centre of Purnea is now reduced to the position of a village *bazar*. The importance of Kasba has also declined due to the newly started market of Gulabbagh. There are still some *golas* of Marwaris who now chiefly deal in jute and grain. Formerly handpound rice of Kasba was popular not only in Purnea district but also outside the district. But now the demand has declined. The hide trade of Kasba has also lost its importance. It is reported that annually Kasba handles about two lakh maunds of jute

Barsoi has now lost some of its trade due to the partition of the country The former Parbatipur section of the Eastern Bengal State Railway which connected Barsoi junction with Parbatipur now falls in East Pakistan and so it lost that source of trade Barsoi *bazar* is about 4 miles from the Barsoi Railway station. The road which links the *bazar* with the Railway station is *katcha*. The river Mahananda which traverses this road is unbridged and consequently the goods are mainly carried on bullock-carts, which increase the transhipment cost. Barsoi *ghat* which was a good source of transhipment of goods has now become practically defunct due to silting of the course of the river Mahananda The main trade of Barsoi is jute and next to it is hide. On average about two lakh maunds of jute and 1,500 maunds of hides are annually exported from Barsoi The main mode of conveyance for goods is now railway. Dried fish in a small quantity is exported from here. A weekly *hat* known as Sukhatia (dried stuff) clears a lot of dried fish at Barsoi.

Kharkhari is one of the important trade centres for tobacco It is reported that about 6,000 maunds of tobacco is exported from Kharkhari annually. Kharkhari is in the extreme interior and the road communication is very poor. This affects the trade.

The other small markets of the district are Banmankhi in Sadar subdivision, Sonaili in Katihar subdivision, Jogbani in Araria subdivision and Bishrampur and Bahadurganj in Kishanganj subdivision. They are a great source for buying and selling of consumers goods. Banmankhi is gaining importance and has attracted the attention of the businessmen. It is gathered that in the main *bazar* area of Banmankhi the land is being sold at even Rs. 5,000 per *katha*. It is so because there is a proposal to start a sugar mill at Banmankhi in near future near the Railway station. The chief commodities for trade are tobacco, jute, mustard seed, grain and *ghee*.

Hats.

Most of the internal trade is carried on at village *hats*, which are held on fixed days twice or thrice a week. Every village is

within a few miles of some *hats*, and the villagers go there regularly to sell or barter their wares and buy whatever they require for the ensuing week. Almost all the *hats* were a source of profit to the former proprietors who leased them out to farmers (*mustajirs*) who in their turn levied fees (*bhatti*) in cash or in kind. After the passing of the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950, the Government have now stepped into the shoes of the former proprietors and so the *hats* are now settled by the Government. List of *hats* subdivision wise is given in the appendix of the chapter.

The chief modes of conveyance for carrying goods in the *hats* are done by bullock-carts, pack bullocks and ponies, and by head load.

Trade with Nepal

From the earliest times a brisk trade had existed between Nepal and the Indian districts on the Nepal border. Trade betwen the district of Purnea and Nepal had long been of great importance. The chief trade routes that existed betwen Nepal and Purnea have found place in the chapter on Communication. Regarding the commodities of exports and imports the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911) mentions as follows:

"In 1790 the Collector reported that the exports to that country consisted of salt, betel nuts, spices, small cardamoms, pepper, asafoetida, sugar tobacco cotton cloths, woollen cloths, muskets, flints dried fish, earthen pots and live hogs while the imports were timber, ready made woodwork, rice and paddy, other grains, Bhutan blankets, cotton, large cardamoms, oranges, wax, madder, drugs, lac catechu, frankincense, iron, rhinoceros horns and hides, *mainas*, parrots and falcons. He added a note on the freedom of the traffic from all duties. In the following year the Collector gave a detailed account of this trade, and estimated the value of the exports at Rs 32,500 and of the imports at Rs. 3,04,000. A system of registration for the Nepal trade was introduced in 1875, and there are now 11 registering stations, at which *muharrirs* collect statistics of the trade passing the frontier. Five are situated in the Araria subdivision, viz., Kuari Kusambha, Mirganj, Panthamari and Pathardewa, and six are in the Kishanganj subdivision, viz., Bhatgaon, Dharsa, Gandharbdanga, Karabari, Pahora and Teragach. The

largest frontier market is Gandharbdanga and next in importance are Jhiktia and Nepalganj. Other frontier markets which may be mentioned are Nawabganj, Rajola, Kursakata, Megha and Sikti in the Araria subdivision, and Digalbank, Karabari, Phulbari and Karlihat in the Kishanganj subdivision."*

In 1792 the Anglo-Nepalese commercial treaty was signed to foster the trade relations with Nepal. But it was not put into practice. Perhaps it was signed under the compelling political circumstances prevailing in Nepal and so when the compelling circumstances were over the treaty was considered to have had outlived its necessity.† This is borne out by the complaint made by Mr. Pagan who had settled as a cultivator and merchant on the frontiers of Purnea towards Morung. After the treaty of Sugauli signed on the 2nd December, 1815 and ratified in March, 1816 it appears that the trade with Purnea along with the other districts of India had resumed.

Regarding the custom arrangement the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911) mentions as follows—

"The following account of the customs arrangements is condensed from the *Statistical Account of Bengal*. Transit dues are levied by the Nepal Government on both exports and imports. The frontier is divided into a certain number of sections, known as *sair mahals* which are farmed out for a term of years to contractors called *chaudhris*. The duty on export from Nepal is levied either by weight or *ad valorem*, and payment in kind is seldom received. It is paid at the time of purchase in the local market, and the purchaser is there furnished with a pass or *chai chitta*. The goods are only examined on the frontier, to see if the description on the pass corresponds with the article exported. Smuggling if detected is punished by the levy of double duty. As regards imports into Nepal, the duty is levied when the importer has a shop in Nepal, he has to pay only a certain sum annually, and is [illegible] to import as much as he pleases, free of duty, provided he sells in the shop for which he is assessed. Duty on imports is

*Old District Gazetteer of Purnea, p. 122, also see *Hunter's Statistical Account of Purnea*, p. 880.

†*Anglo Nepalese Relations* by Dr. K. C. Chaudhury, p. 72.

generally levied in kind at so many seers in the maund. If the articles do not admit of payment in kind, and the importer has not a recognised shop, they are subjected to an *ad valorem* duty before he is permitted to retail, the rate being left entirely to the discretion of the *chaudhri*, whose object is to levy the highest amount he can without making it prohibitive of further trading. For instance, in the case of a load of brassware passing into the Morang, the vendor of which has no shop and intends to retail from village to village, he would pay a certain sum assessed on the value of his stock, and would then be furnished with a pass authorizing him to sell his goods without any further payment of duty. The trade with Purnea is almost entirely in the hands of British subjects, such as Telis and Kalwars, who have established shops on either side of the border."

The former registering offices have been abolished since long. Only two check posts in the border of Purnea are now maintained one at Jogbani in Araria subdivision and the other at Galgalia in Kishanganj subdivision. It is reported that till November, 1958 only one border post at Jogbani was working and so all the official trades with Nepal to or from were regulated through Jogbani border post alone. The border post of Jogbani is under the administrative control of the Superintendent of Central Excise, Purnea Circle I, and Galgalia border post is under the Kishanganj Circle. The land frontier of the Indian territory in Kishanganj subdivision touches the land border of Nepal at many points, important among them being Teragachh, Dighalbank, Golhabari and Suribhitta. The land frontier of Nepal in Araria subdivision also touches many points but the important routes are Bathanaha-Birpur, Bathanaha-Phulkobo, Bathnaha-Sonepur, Bathnaha-Parasi-Kuati and Jogbani-Biratnagar.

Goods passing from the border posts of Jogabani and Galgalia are both covered under invoices and without invoices. The former type pass from the border check-posts after proper examination by the Border Examiner, Land Custom, and the Inspector posted at Jogbani and Galgalia respectively and a rebate of excise duty is given to Government of Nepal. The latter, i.e., those goods passing without the cover of invoice are subjected to a levy in Nepal and no rebate on such goods of excise duty is allowed. Though the prescribed routes for

regular trade to and from Nepal is via Jogbani and Galgalia, there is no watch on the long land frontier extending almost the whole northern border of the district and therefore, a regular check on goods coming otherwise through Galgalia and Jogbani is not being properly exercised. The customs check on the border is confined to goods only and has not been extended to passengers. No restrictions have been imposed on the coming of Nepali currency into the Indian territory.

Transit duties are still levied by the Nepal Government on both exports and imports. The Government of India do not levy duty on goods of Nepal. For commercial purposes the Government of India under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs maintain an office at Biratnagar under the Assistant Commercial Attachee of India who is under the administrative control of the Indian Embassy at Kathmandu.

The chief commodities for exports from India to Nepal are manufactured goods, kerosene oil and salt and from Nepal to India are jute and timber. The statistics of exports and imports to and from India and Nepal of Jogbani border post for 1959-60 are reported as follows by the Central Excise Department, Purnea :—

TABLE 1

Statement showing import by land

(From Nepal to India from 1st July 1959 to 30th June 1960.)

Serial no.	Description of commodity.	Unit of quantity or measurement.	Quantity of import.
1	Rice	lbs.	1,94 66,138
2	Mustard seeds	lbs.	49,200
3	Potato	lbs.	6,56 492
4	Hides ..	lbs.	19,992
5	Paddy	lbs.	4,920
6	Hessian marks	package	32 000
7	Caddis	bale	167
8	Jute wash ..	bale	146
9	Jute Hessian cloth ..	yds	75 96,000
10	Jute twine	bale	1,720
11	Gunny bags	lbs.	67,68 200
12	Vegetable non-essential oil ..	tons	14
13	Oil-cakes	lbs.	2,57,610
14	Timber	cft.	3,24,374
15	Sleeper .. .	cft.	45,629
16	Raw jute	bale	4 619

TABLE 2.

Statement showing export by land.

(From India to Nepal from 1st July 1959 to 30th June 1960.)

Serial no.	Description of commodity.	Unit of quantity or measurement.	Quantity of export.
1	Cloth	59 yds	85,98,135¾
2	Footwear	Pairs	1,27,794
3	Kerosene oil	Gallons	4,25,728
4	Cigarette	Nos.	3,77,11,000
5	Tyres and tubes ..	Nos.	1,900
6	Dry battery	Nos	2,88,662
7	Electric goods	Nos.	6,752
8	Sugar	Cwt.	1,838,564
9	Tea	Lbs.	81,045 90
10	Biri tobacco	Lbs.	30,323 19
11	Vegetable non-essential oil ..	Tons	429 00
12	Soap	Cwt.	1,931 454
13	Paints	Cwt.	163 132
14	Varnishes	Gallons	174,34
15	Petrol	Gallons	2,50,982
16	Refined diesel oil ..	Gallons	10,570
17	Lubricating diesel oil ..	Gallons	15,040
18	Matches	Gross.	100

TABLE 3.

Statistics of manufactured goods exported to Nepal under customs and C. E. seal via Galgalia Check-Post from July, 1959 to June, 1960.

Serial no.	Name of commodities.	Unit of quantity.	Quantity of export.	Remarks.
1	Dry batteries ...	No.	59 108	
2	Vegetable non essential oil.	Ton	111·97	
3	Lubricating diesel oil	Ton	65·87	
4	Motor spirit ...	1 G	2924·00	
5	Kerosene oil ...	1 G	46200	
6	Biri Tobacco ..	lb.	16,356	
7	Cigarette ...	No.	43 40,000	

Serial no.	Name of commodities.	Unit of quantity.	Quality.	Remarks
8	Footwear ...	No. of pair.	7,243	
9	Safety Matches ...	Gross of Boxes.	9 000	
10	Soap	Cwt	625·01	
11	Package Tea ...	lb.	2,910.00	
12	Sugar ...	Cwt.	365 69	
13	High Speed Diesel Oil.	1 G	1 408 00	
14	Cotton Fabrics ..	Sq. yds.	2,20 604	

The statistics of exports and imports to and from Nepal of goods traffic of the Galgalia Railway station which is the main avenue, for 1959-60 are as follows :—

India to Nepal	(Figures in maunds)
Commodities	
Mahua flower	4,371
Match	879
Dal	4,402
Kerosene oil	12,141
Iron goods	643
Salt	9,748
Battery	183
Cigarette	128
Gunny bags	250
Molasses	2,427
Blankets	26
Cloth	454
Biri leaves	611
Lime	1,360
Machinery parts	1 735
Medicine	13
Shoe	24
Biscuit	85

*The statistics have been collected personally from Galgalia Railway Station.

	(Figures in maunds.)
Soap	437
Lubricating oil	625
Petrol	120
Mustard oil	645
Tea	34
Castor oil	24
Rice	2,514 (was sent from Jhapa district of Nepal to Morong district of Nepal in January, 1960.)

Besides, miscellaneous goods such as medicine, tea, machinery parts, etc., are largely exported from India to Nepal by parcel traffic through Galgalia Railway station. The volume of parcel traffic was 12,397 maunds in 1959-60.

The chief commodities of imports to India from Nepal from this side of Nepal are only rice and jute The volume of rice in 1959-60 was 148,018 maunds and of jute 72,550 maunds

Biratnagar in Jogbani side and Bhadarpur in Galgalia side are the two main trade centres of Nepal from which Purnea district has regular and close commercial intercourse The markets of these two places are virtually captured by the Indian merchants.

Before concluding some mention has to be made of what is believed to be a well-ramified illicit trade of non-duty paid *ganja*, from Nepal. *Ganja* is available in abundance in Nepal where there is no restriction on the cultivation and sale of *ganja*. *Ganja* is sold in Nepal at the rate of Rs. 15 to Rs. 20 per seer and the price of one seer *ganja* in South Bihar is Rs 120, in North Bihar Rs. 100, and in West Bengal from Rs 160 to Rs. 200 The long border with Nepal encourages the smuggling of *ganja* but the main centres in Purnea district are Jogbani, Bhatgaon, Kuari, Ghurna and Bibiganj where check-posts are maintained by the State Government.

Most of the smuggled *ganja* is supposed to go to West Bengal through Purnea district. A quantity goes to Madras, Uttar Pradesh and Bombay. Various ingenious methods are adopted for smuggling of Nepali *ganja*. Trucks, bullock carts and railway trains are used for sending contraband *ganja* ingeniously camouflaged.

The statistics of detection with quality of Nepali *ganja* in Purnea district for the last five years are reported to be as follows :—

Year.	Total number of cases detected.	Total quantity of ganja seized		
		Md.	Sr.	Ch
1955-56	315	16	19	3
1956-57	301	16	21	14
1957-58	356	39	1	13
1958-59 . ..	409	84	10	2
1959-60	451	48	21	8

A big smuggling was detected in the night of 19th April, 1958 on the Jogbani-Kursela Road near the village Sarasi. Nine bullock carts which superficially appeared to contain straw were detected which contained 56 well packed bales of *ganja* covered by water proof bags. The total weight of the contraband *ganja* was 31 maunds and 23 seers. Out of the nine accused sent up in this case five were sentenced to six months rigorous imprisonment.

Fairs and Melas.

Purnea district has been famous for fairs and *melas* held at different places throughout the year. There is only a lull for the two months of rainy season, otherwise there are some shop-keepers who keep themselves moving from *mela* to *mela* in the other ten months. Some of the *melas* like Karhagola and Khagra are quite old.

The Karhagola mela had been mentioned in the *Riyazu-s-salatin* (1788) . It is held at *Karhagola ghat*, which is the terminus of the Ganga-Darjeeling Road, on the bank of the river Ganga every year on the *Maghi Purnima* day of the full moon of Magh (corresponding with 15th or 16th February) and lasts for about a fortnight. The day is looked upon by the orthodox Hindus as an auspicious one, being the day on which according to Hindu mythology *Kaliyug* began, and therefore, a bath in the sacred waters of Ganga is considered an act of virtue. A large concourse of people attend the place, and the fair was in the past an important institution from a commercial point of view. A brisk trade was carried on in spices, iron, plough shares, knives, razors, brass and iron cooking utensils, blankets and *daries*. But now it has lost its trade importance and is only a religious fair, sweet-meats, tea, betel and cosmetic goods have still brisk sale. The fair is now settled by Government and has an average income from Rs. 1,200 to Rs. 1,500.

Khagra *mela* in the Kishanganj subdivision was started in 1883 on the initiative of Mr. Weeks, the then Collector of Purnea. It was liberally encouraged by Nawab Saiyad Ata Hussain, the *zamindar* of the Khagra estate and became an annual institution. The *mela* used to attract elephants, horses, cattle, camel, dumbas and ponies from different parts of the country. Produce from Nepal and Tibet like musk, leather, dogs, and birds used to be brought to Khagra *mela* and they had a brisk sale. The fair is held towards the end of December and lasts for about a month. Before the partition of India in 1947 the *mela* was very important from commercial point of view Previously shop-keepers of Dacca and other places now in East Pakistan used to come here It is reported that the shop-keepers of the Punjab also visited the *mela* But after partition the shop-keepers of East Pakistan and West Pakistan have ceased to come. Before 1947 the average figures of animals are reported to be as follows :—

Kinds of animals.	Number.
Elephants	500 to 800
Bullocks and cows	50,000 approximately.
Buffaloes	20,000 approximately.
Bhutia ponies	5,000 approximately
Tattu (*desi*)	8,000 approximately
Horses (*Sareswal*)	3,000 approximately
Sheep and goats	5,000 approximately.
Camels	2,000 approximately.
Dogs	500 approximately
Birds	Negligible.

The *mela* came under the management of the State Government in 1953 after vesting of the Khagra estate under the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950. Some portions of the *mela* fall under the *raiyati* lands of the tenants. So when the *mela* came under the management of the Government, the tenants were paid compensation and the Government realised the whole income from the bidders. In 1953-54 the Government settled the *mela* grounds for Rs. 91,527 in 1954-55 for Rs. 89,690, in 1955-56 for Rs. 96,455, and in 1956-57 for Rs. 127,618. In 1957-58 the ex-intermediary, the Khagra Nawab claimed some portions of the *mela* grounds as his *bakast* and homestead land and accordingly injunctions were issued against Government to withhold *mela* on those portions. Owing to the injunctions there became three claimants, viz., Government, tenants and the Khagra Nawab and each one realised income from the portion of his land separately. In 1959-60 by virtue of the amendment of the Bihar Land Reforms Act some portions again came to Government and the Government settled its own portions with the Khagra Nawab at Rs. 55,212.

The statistics of cattle were as follows in 1959-60 :—

Elephants	200
Bullocks and cows	12,000
Buffaloes	9,000
Bhutia ponies	300
Country *tattu*	2,000
Horses	200
Sheep and goats	2,000
Camels	300
Dumbas	40
Dogs	30

A number of new *melas* have been started recently, the Gulabbagh *mela* and Forbesganj *mela* being more important. The Gulabbagh *mela* within the limits of the Purnea Municipality, sponsored by Raja P.C. Lal of Nazarganj in 1919 has now gained wide popularity. The *mela* was first held at Purnea city but was later shifted to present site. The fair is held annually in the month of December and lasts for a month. On the average, about one lakh of people visit this *mela*. The average income of Government from this mela since the vesting of the estates in Government is from Rs. 22,000 to Rs. 25,000 annually.

The Forbesganj *mela* is held on the eve of Kalipuja and lasts for about a month. The average income of Government is about Rs. 60,000 annually. About one lakh of people come in this *mela*.

Besides there are several small *melas* in the district. They are as follows:—

Name.	Period.	Duration.	Average income of Government.*
			Rs.
Madanpur *mela* ..	February ..	One week	10,000
Chanderdahi *mela* ..	December ..	15 days	40,000
Gokulpur *mela* ..	January	15 days	6,000
Bishanpur *mela* ..	November and December.	One month	5,000
Sarsi (Dharhara) *mela*	October and November.	15 days ..	5,000
Dharamganj *mela* ..	January ..	One month	44,000
Khawaspur *mela* ..	January ..	One month	22,000
Shankarpur *mela* ..	March ..	One month	16,000

But in Purnea these *melas* have some vital drawbacks. These *melas* as stated before were started by the aristocrats of the district. They made these *melas* for themselves not only a source of good

*Details have been collected from Collectorate Office, Purnea.

economic gain but to attract people some provisions for amusements and recreation were made. Unfortunately all these *melas* had encouraged colonies of prostitutes to be set up in the *mela* grounds. Their presence in the *melas* was a source of immorality and diseases. The *melas* have drained away more money from the villages than what they could spend. In this way some of the *melas* may be said to have become a liability to the district economy.

Jute.

Jute crop of Purnea has an important significance in the commercial world. Purnea is one of the chief growing areas of not only of Bihar but of India and brings good foreign exchange to the country. Jute cannot be grown on all types of soils and climate. In pre-partition days the chief growing areas of jute were the districts of East Bengal along with Purnea district in Bihar. But after partition India lost that great source and so it became essential to extend the acreage under jute crop in Purnea in Bihar and in the areas lying in the north of West Bengal where both soil and climate are suitable for jute crop. As the area of jute in India became very limited the price of jute began to soar high after 1947 and so the growers of jute got an impetus to pay more attention to jute.

So far as the volume of export is concerned we do not have authentic and comprehensive figures. Jute is exported by river, rail and roads. The important rail centres for jute are Forbesganj, Kishanganj, Purnea, Katihar, Barsoi, Thakurganj, Kasba, Jalalgarh and Jogbani. As stated before the chief *mandis* of jute are Forbesganj, Kishanganj and Gulabbagh which on average deal in from 40 lakh to 45 lakh maunds annually. The *arhats* at Katihar handle about two and half lakh maunds whereas the two jute mills of Katihar consume about three lakh maunds annually. The other trade centres of jute, namely, Barsoi, Jalalgarh, Kasba and Thakurganj handle on an average about 11 lakhs of maunds of jute annually. Besides there are some petty dealers and agents of the jute merchants of Calcutta who either make house to house purchases or purchase in the weekly *hats* which are so numerous in Purnea. It is reported that approximately twenty to twenty-five lakh maunds on average are exported by such dealers annually.

The outturn figures of jute in Purnea as mentioned in the *Bihar Statistical Handbook,* 1955, was as follows :—

Year.	Outturn in thousand of tons.
1953-54	388
1954-55	285
1955-56	357

From the outturn figures it appears that Purnea produces approximately from 90 lakh maunds to one crore maunds of jute. If we compare the outturn figures with the *mandis* and other figures stated above we will find that the margin left is about ten to fifteen lakh maunds. From the calculation of these figures an approximate conclusion can be made that Purnea exports on average from 80 lakh to 90 lakh maunds of jute.

In 1956 some jute-growing areas were transferred to West Bengal in implementation of the transfer of Territories Act and it was expected that it will affect the jute *mandi* of Kishanganj. But from local inquiry it appears that it has not affected the *mandi* of Kishanganj as the growers of jute transferred to West Bengal still send their produce in the *mandi* of Kishanganj.

Fair price shops.

The fair price shops were first started during the Second World War period to check the abnormal rise of the essential consumers goods. Due to War the things which are essential for life become scarce. Throughout the whole period of War the Government imposed control over the essential commodities, viz., on cloth, kerosene oil, foodgrains and sugar. Even after the close of the War control remained as the essential things were still scarce. The control was abolished in 1950 but had to be re-imposed shortly. Due to failure of *Hathia* rains in 1951 and 1957 there became acute shortage of foodgrains in whole State of Bihar. The Government opened a number of fair price shops throughout the State to check the abnormal rise of prices and also to regulate the distribution of foodgrains. Like the other districts of Bihar such fair price shops were opened in Purnea district also, the details of which are as follows:—

Statement showing supply of foodgrains (wheat, rice, millet, etc.) through fair price shops, number of godowns for storage of Government foodgrains and number of fair price shops functioning in the district of Purnea during the last five years.

(Figures in maunds.)

Year.	1955-56.	1956-57.	1957-58.	1958-59.	1959-60.
1. Supply of food-grains.	65,538	1,21,100	10,63,483	14,67,188	1,68,228
2. Number of godowns functioning for storage of Government foodgrains.	6	5	20	32	18
3. Number of fair price shops functioning in the district.	24	32	620	1,390	445

Merchant Associations.

The Jute Merchant Association has been formed in each of the three *Mandis* of the district, viz., at Forbesganj, Kishanganj and at Gulalbagh in Purnea town. Each of them has a separate entity. In Kishanganj there are also the Kirana Merchant Association, Cloth Merchant Association and Marwari Merchant Association and they are affiliated to North Bihar Chamber of Commerce which has headquarters at Muzaffarpur. A Merchant Association has been formed at Forbesganj recently. These associations have been formed to foster the interests of the businessmen. There is no organisation of the consumers.

Weights and Measures.

Regarding weights and measures the last *District Gazetteer* published in 1911 mentions as follows:—

"The weights and measures in use in Purnea vary considerably. The standard seer of 80 tolas is in general use throughout the district, but for weighing grain, tobacco and jute, a seer of different values is used in particular localities, as shown in the margin. A seer of 132 tolas is also used at Kishanganj for weighing mustard oil. The value of the maund necessarily depends on the value of seer, e.g., where a seer of 68 tolas is used, the maund is equivalent to 50 standard seers. As regards measures of length, the ordinary yard of 36 inches is in use throughout the district for measuring cloth, but in the Araria subdivision a special measure called *kali*, equal to 21 inches, is used for coarse country-made cloth.

Weight in tolas.	Localities.
64	Araria.
68	Dharampur.
72	Araria and Katihar.
85 / 88	Araria and Kishanganj.
90 / 100	Araria, Kadwa and Kishanganj.

"The common measurements of distance are 4½ *haths* =1 *katha*; 20 *kathas* = 1 *rasi*; 85 *rasis* = 1 *kos* or 2 English miles; 10 *kos* = 1 *manzal*. In practice a *rasi* varies from 120 to 150 feet. The denominations of the standard measure of area are—4½ *haths* =1 *katha* or *lagga*; 20 *kathas* or *laggas* =1 *bigha* or one-third of an acre; but in every *pargana* the number of *kathas* to the *lagga* or pole varies and in some of these divisions as many as twenty different *laggas* are in use. Varying standards are often met

with in neighbouring villages and sometime in the same village. It is reported to be 81 inches in Haveli pargana and in Araria, 91 inches in Dharampur and Kishanganj, 99 inches in other parts of Dharampur, and 108 inches in Katihar and Kishanganj.

The marginal table shows the area of the *bigha* according to the length of the *lagga* or pole used the *hath* being equal to 18 inches. The bigha of 4 *haths* is the standard Bengal *bigha*, and both the *bigha* of 4½ *haths* and that of 6 *haths* are common in Purnea. The measures of capacity used for measuring grain and oil are as follows:—

Haths.	Sq. yards	Acre
3½	1,225	·253
3¾	1,406	·288
4	1,600	·333
4¼	1,806	373
4½	2,025	418
4¾	2,256	466
5	2,500	·516
5½	3,025	625
6	3,600	·744
6½	4,225	·873
7	4,900	1·012
9	8,100	1·673

(1) the *koria*, equal to a seer of 80 *tolas* or 92 quarts, is in general use, (2) the *nagri*, which is equal to a seer of 90 *tolas*, is used in Araria, and (3) the *khatta*, which varies greatly, for it represents 5 seers of 80 or 85 *tolas* in Araria; 3, 4, 5 or 6 seers in Katihar; 5 seers in Badaur *pargana*; and 8 seers in the Haveli *pargana*. The seer in all these cases is that common in the locality varying as mentioned above from 68 to 100 *tolas*. The local measures of time, besides the usual divisions of day, month, year, etc., which are the same in native as in English calculation, are as follows:—

60 *pal* 1 *danda*, 120 *danda*-1 *ghari*; 3 *ghari*-1 *prahar*; 4 *prahar*-1 day."

APPENDIX.

List of important hats *in the district of Purnea.*

(1) Sadar subdivision—Gulabbagh, Narda, Daguruwa, Kanharia, Sagunia, Baunmankhi, Jankinagar, Sarsi, Burhia, Kurba, Dhamdaha, Damgara, Ladugarh, Barhara, Raghunasanagar, Mirganj, Baisi, Rupauli, Bhawanipur, Akbarpur, Kasba, Garhbanaili, Kharaiya, Ichhamoti, Amour, Machhatta, Begampur, Bibiganj, Ekma.

(2) Katihar subdivision—Korha, Falka, Pothia, Samaili, Semapur, Barari, Kursela, Kantanagar, Bhawanipur, Jarlahi, Basanganj, Sapni, Haila, Dandakhora, Tikaili, *Baina,* Wastaul, Mansahi, Mainanagar, Mahadeopur, Kehuna, Laxmipur, Kumaripur, Rosna, Nawabganu, Katakosh, Manihari, Kajigown, Baghmara, Kisanpur, Barria, Amdabad, Sonaili, Bhagawn, Beloun, Rasalpur, Maulnapur, Bhelaganj, Kurum, Benigbari, Parbhaili, Nandanpur, Chandour, Durgaganj, Kumhari, Bigour, Abadpur, Sudhani, Barsoi, Barsoibazar, Ajamnagar, Salmari, Ghordah, Sihour, Benirsalpur, Balrampur,

(3) Araria subdivision—Jogbani, Sonapur, Falkaha Ghurna, Milki, Dimaria, Dhanha, Debiganj, Khapdah, Parwaha, Mndoul, Khawaspur, Fulbaria, Araria station hat, Jokihat, Jahanpur, Madanpur, Pategna, Palasi, Sikti, Kursakata, Raniganj, Basedih, Ramghat, Dumaria,

(4) Kishanganj subdivision—Kishanganj, Khagra Kani Bansbari, Bhatabari, Barbata, Altanhat, Sontha, Bahadurganj, Gangi, Meharganj Lohagara, Tulsia, Dighalbank, Tapuhat, Padampurhat, Fulbaria, Teghagachh.

CHAPTER VIII.

COMMUNICATIONS.

Old time Trade Routes and Highways.

The earliest record which gives scattered reference to some of the old time trade routes and highways of Purnea is the *Riyazu-s-salatin* (1788). It mentions that Gaudah-gola (Karhagola) on the banks of the Ganges was the resort of traders and *mahajans* from various places. It appears that Muslim detachments from Delhi used to pass through the highways of Purnea enroute to Gauda (Bengal), to crush the recalcitrant attitude of the Muslim *subedars* of Bengal. There were also settlements of sections of the Muslim army and horse at places on the border of Bihar touching Nepal and there were apparently such settlements on the borders of Purnea district as well. Such settlements must have opened up some sort of highways and trade routes. The predominance of Mulsim population in Purnea in the border areas of West Bengal (Kishanganj subdivision) goes to prove this fact It also appears that from the time immemorial Purnea had highways traffic with Nepal There was also trade connection through roads and tracks with Darjeeling. The river-borne traffic was carried on with its border districts of Bhagalpur, Rajmahal (Santhal Parganas) and with Patna, the capital of Bihar The waterways of the district were much more important in the decades prior to the advent of British administration in the district. Large *bujrahs* (boats) laden with merchandise used to pass by the Ganga, Mahananda and other rivers Karhagola was a very important trade centre and connected Purnea with Bhagalpur and Santhal Parganas.

Stray reference to communications of the early British period is also found in the old English correspondence volumes preserved in the Record Room of the Collector of Purnea and referred to in the *A Hand Book of the Bihar and Orissa Provincial Records* (1771 to 1859). A letter dated 9th March, 1791 is regarding commercial communications between Purnea and Nepal. Karhagola seems to have been connected with both river-borne traffic and highways with the other places. By letters dated 8th July, 1788 and 26th August, 1788 the Collector of Purnea was asked not to discourage exportation of grain from his district and ordered to pass grains of merchants detained at

Karhagola and was further asked not to interfere in sale, purchase or transportation of grains. Letter dated 22nd October, 1789 from Thos. Cust, Captain Commanding 32nd Battalion of Sepoys, 4th Brigade asked the Collector of Purnea to order *zamindars* for usual supplies of fire-wood to troops passing through his district, and to provide boats to enable him to cross the Ganga at points to Karhagola (Caragolla). The importance of Karhagola-Darjeeling Road is shown by the fact that a Supervisor for this road used to be posted at Karhagola. There is in existence the grave of one young Supervisor Robert Charles Atkinson who died at Karhagola in 1863.

From these letters it appears that during the period under reference Purnea had developed water-borne and land highways communications not only for trade and commerce but also for the movement of the detachments.

The monumental works of Col. R. H. Phillimore on the Survey of India published by the Surveyor-General of India give some indications of the state of the communications when the first survey of the Purnea district and the adjoining areas was done. Rennel mentions in his journal that he had visited Purnea in 1765-1766. The condition of the communications could well be imagined and the greatest credit is due to Rennel who mentions "I went so far to the westward as the Purnanyah and Morung countries, and have now finished the north limit of Bengal from Assam to Morung, which is near 3 degrees of Longitude". Col. Phillimore mentions that Rennel had himself surveyed the whole area north of the Ganga from Purnea on the west to Sylhet on the east Adams, one of Rennel's surveyors had surveyed certain rivers in western Purnea and had died while in service during 1767. In 1774 Rennel had completed his series of Provincial Maps which he submitted with smaller scale General Maps and against Rennel is shown the area "from Purnea to Sylhet.*

From the same work of Col. Phillimore, Vol. I, p. 77, it will be seen that Purnea played a big part in finding out the height of some of the peaks of the Himalayas. Sir William Jones, Founder of the Asiatic Society of Bengal as quoted by Col. Phillimore had mentioned that he had observed Chumalury peak and the adjoining mountains of Tibet which could well clearly be seen from Purnea. Henry Cole Brooke during his residence at Purnea (1789—93) was attracted to the question and before he could conclude his observations he was transferred

*Col. Phillimore's *Historical Records of the Survey of India*, Vol. I, p. 88.

from Purnea. He had, however, made some preliminary investigations into the matter and gave a height of 26,000 ft.

Purnea also came into some prominence when the Nepal Frontier was surveyed during 1816—20. Due to the bad communications and insanitary conditions, one of the surveyors Peter Boileau, commanding the Resident's escort at Kathmandu who had continued the survey eastward along the boundaries of Tirhut and Purnea, lost his life. Col. Phillimore mentions, "unfortunately he succumbed to the cruel climate of the *Tarai* in December, 1818 leaving nine unfinished copies of boundary maps, three of the north-west borders of Chumparun and six of the frontier of Purnea". Later John Fitz Patrick had carried on revenue survey in Purnea in 1840—45. Although not much precise information is available, it may be concluded that there were the basic arteries of communication as otherwise the revenue survey in Purnea could not have been concluded during 1840—45.

Francis Buchanan who visited Purnea in 1809-10 had left some account of the old trade routes. Regarding river-borne traffic he has mentioned as follows about the river Ganga (Bhagirathi) :—

> "At all seasons of the year it is navigable in the largest vessels which the native use, and which are of very considerable berthen, although they draw little water. The Burhi Ganga is a very considerable branch, is navigable at all seasons, and is the route by which trade passes to Gorguribah and so up the Kalindi, its depth however, is more considerable than its width, which is inferior to that of many branches which in spring become altogether dry."

Kosi and Mahananda rivers also had a considerable river-borne traffic. The details of the river-borne trade have been given separately.

When Buchanan visited Purnea the condition of the roads was not satisfactory. The traffic roads were meant for narrow wheeled vehicles and were not metalled. The roads of the district were all fair-weather roads, suitable for wheeled traffic, horses, elephants and men. Indigo plantations by the Europeans had started earlier to Buchanans' visit and the planters had to make some tracks fit for bullock-carts to carry the indigo boxes to the nearest bigger depot. The planters also used to meet frequently socially and some of the indigo concerns were connected by roads and tracks which could be covered by horse-drawn light traps, bullock-carts and *shampanies*. Buchanan has

mentioned that "near the capital and some indigo works a few roads have been made but in general, although carts are much in use, they are left to find a road in the best manner that they can. A great part of the country is high and sandy, and, therefore, carts do not absolutely sink even after rain, but the roads are miserably cut, and the wheels soon make keep-ruts, which require a constant change of place. Little attention seems to have been paid by the Magistrates in keeping up the great lines of communication either with the military cantonment or with the capitals of the adjacent districts The convicts indeed occasionally work on them, but the effect of their labour is little perceptible much of their time having been employed on less public roads."

Stray reference to condition of roads is available in the old English Correspondence Volumes in Purnea District Record Room. The letter number 314, dated the 12th June, 1855, contains valuable information regarding the roads of Purnea In this letter the Collector of Purnea had reported to the Commissioner about the principal roads of the district as follows –

"1. From Caragolah Ghat to Titalyah *via* Purnea and Kishunganj,

2. From Purneah North to Nathpore,

3. From Purneah North towards the Morung *via* Arrareah

4. From Purneah North *via* Buhadoorgunge,

5. From Gondwanah to Suhora Ghaut in the Coosea,

6. From Purneah West *via* Bunbary Mussoree Gola and Raneeganje,

7. From Purneah South-West towards Bhaugulpore *via* Choonapore Potea,

8. From Purneah East towards Dinajpore, and

9. From Purneah South-East to Muneeharee.

They were all fair-weather roads and only possible for Hackrees during the dry weather. During the rainy season, the traffic was carried on by means of the rivers Mahanandee, Coossee, Sourah, Kumkur and others. The goods carried on these lines were principally grain, mustard-seed, rice, wheat, Teesee, peas, fly, cotton, goor, salt and Kerjai. Usually each Hackrey carried 8 to 10 maunds of goods and the hire of the Hackrey paid was Re. 0-4-0. There was certain fixed rate from station for a Hackrey.

"From Carrgola to Purneah a distance of 28 miles was paid Rs. 1-4-0. From Purneah to Kishunganje 40 miles Rs. 1-8-0 and so on. Goods were carried principally to Calcutta, Patna, Shahabad for sale. The Collector thought that there should be proper roads to connect the different parts of the district.

"He noted that there was great scarcity of every description of building materials. Wood was procurable from the Morung but there was no good clay to make bricks with. Shell lime was procurable at several paces but there was very little lime-stone to be had. Proper metal in sufficient quantities to metal roads was also not available. There was hardly any mason or carpenter except those who were brought from other districts. There was also a trouble for labour as the Railways had attracted the coolies."

Hunter in his *Statistical Account of Bengal,* Volume XV (Districts of Monghyr and Purniah) published in 1877 has given a description of the principal roads and trade route along with the names of some of the markets in Purnea.

Before a quotation from Hunter's *Statistical Account of Purnea* is given it may be mentioned here that much before Hunter's book was published the British administration had taken deep roots in the district. The European Indigo Planters had, by that time started plantations practically all over the district and had even come to have more prominent landed interest as *zamindars* or *ijaradars*.* The Indigo Planters did one good to the district and that is, they opened up the countryside by some communication arteries. Purnea is more or less a level country with an admixture of sand in the soil. After the crops are cut it is quite easy to cut roads or tracks on which bullock-carts could pass. Besides, the improvement of roads due to the Indigo Planters, there was a more active communication and trade relationship with parts of Nepal which adjoin the district of Purnea and the other neighbouring districts of Bengal, namely, Dinajpur, Malda and portion of Assam. Before Hunter's Statistical Account was published in 1877 a Road Cess Committee as a precursor to the District Board under Local Self-Government Act had already been formed for looking after the construction and maintenance of the roads. A cess was levied on the *zamindars* for this purpose and the amount was utilised for maintaining the old roads and for opening up the new roads.

*See *Memoirs of a Bengal Civilian* by John Beames (1961).

The District Magistrate had a very large hand in the formation of the Road Cess Committee. Some of the old bridges and culverts in Purnea district made by the Road Cess Committee in the seventies and eighties of the 19th century are still in existence. But it has to be mentioned that roadways for trade purposes and for passenger traffic could not eliminate the importance of the waterways for the self-same purpose. Hunter mentions:—

"Means of Communication are not so good in Purniah District generally as in neighbouring Districts of Bengal and Behar. The tract of country, however, lying north of the Headquarters Station, is fairly well opened out by roads, many of which were made during the relief operations of 1874, and as this whole system of roads converges on the great Darjiling and Karagola Road, it is thereby connected with the river Ganges, and beyond the river, by steamer, with the East Indian Railway at Sahibganj The following statement of the roads borne on the books of the Road Cess Committee, together with their length and the expenditure on each of them during the cess year 1874-75, has been specially supplied to me by the Chairman The names of the chief markets situated on each road are also given The first nine on the list are famine roads; and the greater part of the expenditure shown against them was on account of compensation for lands taken up in 1874 for their construction, and which could not be assessed during the hurried operations of that period The road cess income during 1874-75 was £5,936 13s. od on account of cess on lands; and £254 17s 1½d. on account of cess on houses, realized at the maximum rate provided for in Act X of 1871—that is, ½ anna on every rupee, or 3/8 d. in the shilling, or 7½ d. in the pound. The demand for the year was as follows.—

Cess on lands, £7,087 10s. od; cess on houses £300; fines £105 14s. od; total £7,493 4s. od.

There was accordingly, a balance of £ 1,301 13s. 10½d; the largeness of the amount being due to the fact that little severity in realization was used after the late period of distress. The Road Cess Committee have endeavoured as far as possible to make their

roads fall in with those of Bhagalpur on the west, and Dinajpur on the east, so as to complete the communication between the Behar Province and Assam. The second road on the list was made entirely with this view, and is a continuation of the north Emigration Road of Bhagalpur. It has not yet been bridged, nor has all the earthwork been completed, but it is hoped that ferries will be established and the route opened as a fair-weather road very shortly. The first third, and fourth roads open communication between the bank of the Kusi and the borders of Maldah and Dinajpur, through tracts south of those traversed by the second. Most of the roads to the south of the district—that is, from the eleventh to the twenty-fifth on the list, are repaired under the supervision of Indigo planters, and were originally made by them. They are almost useful roads, not only connecting the factories, but passing through large markets and villages and uniting them with the Headquarters station and the Ganges and Darjiling road. This main line of communication in the District, which is metalled, and, except at Dingra *ghat* on the Mahananda, bridged throughout, runs from Karagola on the Ganges to Titalya, 108 miles

"The following is the list: (1) Road from Keutgram to Tarapur, 79 miles long; cost of repair in 1874-75, £27 13s. 5¾d. This road passes from Dharara and Sirsi markets and indigo factories, by the large village of Bokraha, to Purniah, where it runs for two miles through the civil station along the Ganges and Darjiling road, from which it diverges at the thirtieth mile. It then runs through Nilganj and Mahendrapur markets to the Kadba police station, and thence through the markets at Barsoi or Sultanpur southwards to Tarapur on the Mahananda, opposite Raiganj, at the triple junction of Maldah. Dinajpur and Purniah districts. (2) Road from Nathpur to Atwari near the *taria*, 91 miles long. This road runs along the whole north of the district from Nathpur, close by Matiyari police-station and Sultanpur indigo factory, through *parganas* Terakharda, Sripur, Pawakhali and Surjyapur, to the borders of

Dinajpur. (3) Road from Sahibganj to Bhopla-Tajpur, 78 miles long; cost of repair in 1874-75, £10 11s. 10½d. This road starts from the frontier of Nepal in the north-west corner of the district, and runs past Amona indigo factory, crosses the north Emigration Road near Matiyari, runs through Basantpur, the present Headquarters of the Arariya Subdivision, through Dalmalpur market and Amur-Kasba police-station, across the Ganges and Darjiling road and the river Mahananda at Dengra ferry, and on through Raniganj police outpost and market, crossing the river Sadanu, to the river Nagar on the Dinajpur frontier. It is the main line of communication from the north-west of the district to the eastern divisions. The Nepalis of the sub-*tarai* use it when going to the Nekmard and other fairs in the Rajshahi Division. (4) Road from Tulsia to Bhadeswari *ghat*, 38 miles long; cost of repair in 1874-75, £1 9s. 1½d. This road leaves road no. 2 at Tulsia on the left bank of the Kankai and passes through the Bahadurganj police station to Krishnaganj, where it crosses the Ganges and Darjiling road, and runs on to the borders of Dinajpur, reaching that district at the point where the Nekmard fair is held. (5) Purniah to Basantpur, 24 miles long. This road runs through the large rice mart of Kasba, and is the route ordinarily taken by persons travelling between the Headquarters station and Arariya. (6) Road from Barsoi to Raniganj, 19 miles long; cost of repair during 1874-75, £6 18s. 8d. This road runs north and south from the large market at Barsoi through Balrampur police-station, to meet road no. 3 at Raniganj outpost. It passes through very low country, and is impassable in the rainy season. (7) Road from Basantpur to Raniganj, 5 miles long; passes through Rajakhar market and Gidwas factory, where it crosses the old Nathpur road. (8) Road from Turkeli, the former Headquarters of the Arariya Subdivision, to Bahadurganj, 19 miles long; now of little importance. (9) Road from Bahadurganj to Garwa factory, 18 miles long, passes through Rota market. (10) Road from Purniah to Nathpur, 51 miles long. In former times, when Nathpur was the

great centre for grain trade in the sub-*tarai* tract this was an important road. It passes through Srinagar market, crossing the Saura at Khataghat. The other markets on it are at Gaumati, Pashawa, and Saifganj. (11) Road from Purniah to Damdaha, 20 miles long; cost of repair in 1874-75, £36 18s. 11¾d. It runs to Damdaha, through Kajha and Khaya indigo factories. (12) Road from Pirganj *via* Bhawanipur to Madanchak, at the point where the Sahibganj ferry steamer anchors in the cold and dry weather. It is connected with the Ganges and Darjiling road by three cross roads. It is 34 miles long, and cost to repair in 1874-75, £146 19s. 1¾d. (13) Road from Purniah to Hayatpur, 46 miles long; cost of repair in 1874-75, £175 14s. 11¼d. The markets on this road are Diwanganj, Saifganj, Manshai indigo factory, Nawabganj, and Manihari. Hayatpur is an important market on the boundary of Maldah, where the Kamla and Kalindri rivers are connected with the Ganges. (14) Road from Purniah to Sauragadi, 30 miles long; cost of repair in 1874-75, £121 5s. 3¼d. This is the main route in the cold weather for minor traffic by bullock-carts and pack animals to Bhagalpur, by the Sauragadi ferry, and across *pargana* Chhai, south of the Gugri, to the Ganges at Kuari ferry. (15) Road from Bishunpur to Gondwara, 17 miles long; cost of repair in 1874-75 £25 2s. 9¾d. This is a cross road, passing west of the Headquarters station through the large market and indigo factory of Dumar. (16) Road from Gondwara to Sauragadi, 15 miles in length; cost of repair in 1874-75, £ 30. It connects the Ganges and Darjiling road with the Bhagalpur route. (17) Road from Gondwara to Saifganj, 16 miles long; cost of repair in 1874-75, £63 13s. 5d. (18) Road from Koari to Soharia *via* Borata, 25 miles long; cost in 1874-75, £60. This road and the preceding one connect the Ganges and the Darjiling road, at Gondwara *thana*, with the small village markets and factories in the neighbourhood. (19) Road from Banbhag to Raniganj, 29 miles long; cost of repair in 1874-75, £49 9s. 11d. This road runs almost parallel with the Nathpur road. (20) Road from Puthiya to

Lakshmipur, 8 miles long; cost of repair in 1874-75, £12. This is a small cross road connecting the interior of *pargana* Dharmpur with the Ganges and Darjiling road. (21) Road from Saifganj to Harinkhari, 16 miles long; cost of repair in 1874-75, £50 6s. od., passes Mainanagar indigo factory. (22) Road from Lakshmipur to Kodarkata, a market on the Ganges which has considerable trade with Colgong in Bhagalpur, 8 miles long; cost of repair in 1874-75, £ 12. (23) Road from Diwanganj to Harda *via* Pirganj, 7 miles long; cost of repair in 1874 75, £10 10s. od. This is a cross road connecting the Manihari road with the Ganges and Darjiling road, at the Harda bridge (24) Road from Saifganj to Mahandrapura 15 miles long; cost of repair in 1874-75, £32 18s 8¾d It runs from Saifganj through Hussainganj, where the Kadba *munsifi* is situated. (25) Road from Chakla to Koari, 10 miles long cost of repair in 1874-75, £25 It runs from a point on the Purniah and Sauragadi road, 7 miles from the latter town, to the banks of the Kusi near Bhawanpur Rajdhani (26) Road from Krishnaganj to Titalya, 40 miles long. This is part of the old Darjiling road running through the police-station and large mart of Kaliaganj (27) Road from Ilwabari to Kaliaganj, 9 miles long; cost of repair in 1874-75, £28; connects Kaliaganj with the present Ganges and Darjiling road. (28) Road from Atwari to Titalya, 11 miles long; is part of the Dinajpur and Darjiling road (29) A short road 10 miles in length, connecting the two large villages of Bahadurganj and Pawakhali; cost of repair in 1874-75, £11 1s od. (30) Road from Pawakhali to Kuti, on the left bank of the Mahananda, 12 miles long, passing the large mart of Gangi; cost of repairing in 1874-75, £80. (31) Road from Belgachhi *via* Kanhariya to Kadba, 12 miles long; connects the roads of the south-east of the district with the Ganges and Darjiling road some miles below Dengra ferry. (32) Road from Raniganj *thana* to Khageli *ghat, via* Mansulapati and Purani, 12 miles long; connects Raniganj with the rice-marts on the Kusi. (33) A village road from

Mangra *ghat* on the Panar to Ukua, 6 miles long; cost of the repair in 1874-75, £7 7s. 9½d. (34) Road from Jalalgarh to Arariya, 14 miles long; cost in 1874-75, £29 9s. 5d., an important village road. (35) Road from Arariya to Kursakata, 15 miles long; cost of repair in 1874-75, £60 0s 2d. (36) Road from Arariya to Sikti, 16 miles long; cost of repair in 1874-75, £59 18s. 6d; this road and the preceding one connect the Headquarters of the Arariya Subdivision with the police outpost on the Nepal frontier. (37) Road from Arariya to Matiyari, 18 miles long; cost in 1874-75, £9 13s. 4¼d. This road runs along the boundary between *parganas* Sultanpur and Haveli Purniah. Total length of roads in the district, 893 miles, maintained in 1874-75 at a cost of £1,184 7s. 7d. There are besides several small village roads maintained in the Headquarters Subdivision, at a cost of £151 0s. 10d; in Krishnaganj Subdivision, at a cost of £285 9s. 10¼d; and in the Arariya Subdivision, at a cost of £272 16s. 10¼d."

The principal artery in the middle of the 19th century was the Ganges (Ganga) Darjeeling Road. Because of the existence of this road Captain Yule, Commissioner of Bhagalpur Division, could quickly manage to organise and march a detachment consisting mostly of Europeans and Anglo-Indian planters and some Government officials through Karhagola, Purnea, Lalbalu, Kishanganj and then to Darjeeling. Darjeeling was then a part of the Purnea district and was in Bhagalpur Division. There was a fight between Capt. Yule's detachment and the insurgents at Lalbalu 9 miles away from Purnea. The appreciation of strategic importance of the roads received a pointedness during the movement of 1857 and it is no wonder that when the administration stabilised, more attention was paid for improving the roads.

Besides the strategic importance of roads for military movement and maintaining law and order the roads had to be developed for the exploitation of the economic resources. The indigo planters played a great role in the economy of the district and their *kothis* were scattered all over the district. The planters used to have social meets frequently and the *kothis* were, therefore, inter-connected by roads on which traps drawn by a single horse or carriages drawn by two horses or *palki* could easily move. Besides, social meets, the produce of the land, particularly

indigo, had to be taken to the secondary markets and from there ultimately most of it went to Karhagola or Manihari Ghat from where indigo could be transported by boats.

The fairs and markets and particularly the *melas* in Purnea district form a unique feature. From long since there are annual *melas* which have attracted men and goods including livestock from very distant places. There used to be recognised routes to these *melas*. The aristocratic *zamindars* and landed proprietors in the 20th century have started a number of new *melas* in their *zamindaries*. Garh Banaili *mela* sponsored by one branch of Banaili Raj and Gulabbag *mela* sponsored by Raja P. C. Lal are some of the recent instances. It is these *melas* and fairs that supplied strong reasons for the development of communication in 18th and 19th centuries as well. A marked policy of the British administration for fighting famines and abate scarcity was to employ the affected men in making useful roads. It is sad that there should be a series of famines in this district from 1770 to 1874. Because of these famines a number of roads was constructed as a part of the relief operations. The first nine roads mentioned by Hunter were constructed during the famine of 1874.

Purnea had close trade relations with Nepal. A brisk trade was carried on between Nepal and the border district of Purnea and had long been of great importance. The Anglo-Nepalese commercial treaty was signed in 1792 for close trade relations between the company and the Raja of Nepal. But it appears that the treaty was more or less a counsel of despair in so far as the Nepal Government was concerned. Mr. Pagan who had settled as a cultivator and merchant on the frontier of Purnea towards Morung complained to Mr. Duncan, Resident at Banaras, regarding the refusal of the Nepal Government of his merchandise goods passing through Nepal to Tibet*; Sir John Shore, the successor of Lord Cornwallis took serious measure to restore the trade relation with Nepal. It may also be mentioned that in the last part of the eighteenth century there used to be frequent disputes over the boundaries of Nepal and Purnea making the question of realisation of customs duty complicated. This shows that there used to be a considerable trade between Nepal and Purnea and there existed well required tracks with checkposts. As a matter of fact the Collector of Purnea had been asked several times to see that the volume of trade increases through the full ultilisation of the existing trade routes.

***Anglo-Nepalese Relations* by Dr. K. C. Chaudhury, p. 72.

The last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911) mentions "The chief trade routes to Nepal are as follows: (1) Nawabganj to Diwanganj, (2) Amona *via* Sahibganj to Diwanganj; (3) Mirganj to Sahibganj; (4) Kusambha to Patthardewa; (5) Rajola *via* Dhobi to Gogra; (6) Megha *via* Harecha to Jhontiaki; (7) Kursakata to Rangali; (8) Sikti to Rangeli; (9) Dhubeli *via* Kochaha to Chailghazi in Nepal; (10) Phulwari *via* Teragach to Chailghasi; (11) Khaniabad to Athmauza or Athgaon in Nepal; (12) Bairia to Ultabari in Nepal; (13) Karabari *via* Pulsa to Mohabari and Baniani in Nepal; (14) Digalbank *via* Tauganduba to Jhilmilya in Nepal; (16) Tatpoa market to Ladhabari in Nepal; (17) Simalbari *via* Ambari to Khatamani; (18) Bhawaniganj *via* Ghaughati to Khaniabhita, (19) Kalughat to Panthamari and (20) Bhatgaon *via* Dhobgachi to Dholabari and Dohnagiri in Nepal. The routes consist of cart tracks carried for the most part along high ground; they can be traversed with ease, in the dry weather, and with some difficulty during the rains."

The condition of the communications of the district was described in the *Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in Purnea* (1901-08) by Mr. J. Byrne, I.C.S. Most of the information in this report has been reproduced in the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* published in 1911. According to the *Survey and Settlement Report* of 1901—08 the total mileage of roads in the district was 2,615. They were classified as follows:—

IA. Metalled, bridged and drained	122	includes 106.5 of the Ganga-Darjeeling Road.
IIA & B. Unmetalled, bridged and drained (wholly or in part).	644	
Others including village roads maintained.	1,849	
Total	2,615	

Thus, the mileage worked out at nearly two miles of road to every square mile of superficial area. The average annual expenditure on District Board roads for the last ten years ending 1908 exclusive of the Ganga-Darjeeling Road which the Public Works Department made it over to the former in 1888, had been Rs. 33,750 for new work and Rs. 44,150 for repairs. The total

average amount expended by the three Local Boards on road maintenance during the same period was Rs. 15,240.

OLD MODES OF CONVEYANCE.

Regarding the modes of conveyance the last *District Gazetteer* published in 1911 has mentioned as follows:—

"The common country cart (*sagar*) of Bihar drawn by bullocks is in universal use. It is a two-wheeled cart, with a framework made of bamboo and wood and having bamboo poles projecting from each side in front. This conveyance is used both for carrying passengers and country produce For the former a hood is provided roughly made of split bamboos arched and covered with a coarse gunny, a tarpaulin or a worn out *satranji* This is done during inclement weather or when the passengers are females who, according to the custom of the country, do not appear in public The more well-to-do keep *champanis* for the purpose of travelling The *champani* is a covered cart built of wood, and is provided with a pair of springs upon the axle It is drawn by a pair of trotting bullocks, which can go at a good pace The best *champanis*, furnished with cushions and lamps, cost about Rs 200 each, exclusive of the cattle, which may be had for Rs 80 to Rs 100 a pair Another kind of cart is the *raharu*, which is however rare It is a light built two-wheeled cart, like an *ekka*, drawn by a pair of dwarf bullocks called *gaina* At the back of the tray like body there is a kind of canopied seat for the use of passengers, the driver taking his seat in front, as in the *champani*. *Ekkas* drawn by ponies are also very rare and, in fact almost unknown. *Palkis* are owned by almost all the big landholders, but otherwise their use is almost confined to the towns They are also in demand on the occasion of marriages to convey the bridegroom (*dulha*) to the house of his bride's father. A modified form of the *palki* called *nalki* is used by well-to-do people for wedding festivals, when it is decorated with red fringes and tinsel. This is a palanquin supported on wooden pillars with a domed roof, the sides being open, so that the gaudily dressed bridegroom may be seen to advantage during the

marriage procession or *barat*. The litter called *doli* is used by the middle classes for the conveyance of women and old persons. The use of pack ponies is general, nearly every petty dealer in grain and other merchandise having a pony to carry his goods to and from the market."

The elephants which were described by Francis Buchanan in 1809-10 at length appear to have left out by Mr. O'Malley though during his time they were widely used by the rich people of the district. Regarding elephants Francis Buchanan mentions that "the natives retain a great part of fondness for the elephant which they are said to have possessed in the time of Pliny. This animal is considered as the most noble conveyance either for the images of God or for man and a good many are kept. Few, however, keep separate cattle for the former purpose, but employ those on which they ride or to carry the images on days of procession. Most of the elephants are of the bad breed procured in Morang and cost from Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,000. Those who make the first purchase very seldom part with them." Elephants used to be kept by *zamindars* and rich cultivators quite commonly till about two decades back. Elephants were in great demand during the rainy season as many part used to get water-logged.

The number of elephants has considerably decreased now. They are considered good mode of conveyance during the rainy season when other conveyance becomes practically useless due to the low and water-logged areas of the district. The price of an elephant is between Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 5,000. Keeper of elephants meant a high status. Elephants are now procured from the forests of Assam instead of Morung in Nepal and are of good breed. With the changed ideas of aristocracy which itself is on the decline and the availability of cars, motor cycles, etc., the demand for elephants is on the decline. It is also difficult to maintain an elephant. The *melas* of Purnea district used to have a good turnover in elephants. Purnea was a great *shikar* country before and elephants were handy for big game hunting.

ROADS.

The roads are now classified as the National Highway roads, Provincial Highway roads, major district roads and the village roads. They are maintained by the Public Works Department, District Board, Municipality and the Blocks. Before 1948 there was no road of the Public Works Department.

An important old road is the Ganga-Darjeeling Road. This road is one of the historic roads of the State, for prior to the

construction of the railway north of the Ganga, it formed the main route to Darjeeling; for travellers from Calcutta and elsewhere, who came to Karhagola by rail, river or road and then went along it to the foot of the hills. Regarding this road J. Byrne, I.C.S., has mentioned in the *Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations* (1901—08) as follows:—

"This road is metalled for its entire length and is like a boulevard shaded by magnificent trees, it is bridged except at Dingra *ghat*. The old wooden bridges have now been practically all replaced by iron bridges. The road took its present form in 1859 just after the Mutiny, following no doubt some previous small roads. The section between Purnea and Kishanganj is not traceable on Renell's map (1779). The pfesent road from Kishanganj to Titalia (now in East Pakistan) * is also modern. The old road *via* Kalraganj along the banks of the Mahananda, still exists but its importance has passed away. For a long time this trunk road was kept up as a military road, but with the great extension of railway communication on the north of the Ganges, its importance dwindled. It was made over to the District Board in 1888 by the Public Works Department, and a special allotment of Rs. 28,552 is provided annually for its upkeep All the land occupied by this road was duly acquired at a cost of Rs. 34,580. A reduction of Rs. 911 in all was made from the land revenue demand of the estates through which it passes."

In 1955 after a long gap of sixty-seven years this road has been again taken over by the Public Works Department. This is the only National Highway in the district. The construction of National Highway no. 34 which passes through the territory of West Bengal has diminished the traffic of this road. But the opening of the Rajendra *pul* (Ganga Bridge) near Mokamah has increased the prospects of this road. The Mokamah-Purnea Road which will be opened after the construction of several link roads will increase the inter-State traffic of this road.

The present length of Ganga-Darjeeling Road within Purnea district is 56 miles. After the length of 4 miles of this road in Kishanganj town, the other portion of this road within

*Bracket Editor's.

Purnea district was transferred to West Bengal while the suggestion of the State Reorganisation Commission was implemented. A portion of Kishanganj subdivision was transferred to West Bengal.

Public Works Department Roads.

The Public Works Department now, (1960) maintains a total length of 391½ miles roads in the district. The classification of the Public Works Department roads is as follows:—

Name of road.	Classification.	Mileage.	Mileage of black topped roads	Approved cost in Rs.
1	2	3	4	5
				Rs.
1. Purnea Katihar Road ..	P. H.	17	17	13.06312
2. Purnea-Araria-Forbesganj Road	Do .	46	46	50.019
3. Jogbani Kalabalua Sarsi-Kursela Road	Do. .	73	64	105.45341
4. Purnea Dhamdaha Rupauli Road.	Major District road.	34	32	22.3415
5. Purnea Murliganj Road	Ditto .	32	18	7.62 20.0083
6. Katihar Manihari Road ..	Ditto	16	Nil	25.95196 14.87996 11.072
7. Forbesganj Narpatganj Road	Ditto .	11½	6½	19.538
8. Kishanganj-Bahadurganj Road.	Ditto .	17	Nil	19.077
9. Amour Baisi Road .	Ditto ..	9	9	14.46
10. Araria-Jokihat Road .	Ditto .	18	Nil	33.493
11. Palasi-Terhagachi Road ..	Ditto ..	16	Nil	14.50
12. Gulabbagh-Birpur Road ..	Ditto ..	4	Nil	2.90
13. Ganga-Darjeeling Road .	National Highway no. 31.	56	56	18.31268
14. Phulwaria-Kursela Road ..	Ditto .	16	Nil	20.84
15. Amour-Bahadurganj Road	P. H.	26	Nil	43.954

1. *Purnea-Katihar Road.*—This road connects Purnea with Katihar subdivisional headquarters. It is a metalled road. The weak bridge on river Vasna has been replaced by a new bridge, which has already been opened to traffic.

2. *Purnea-Arariya-Forbesganj Road.*—The road has been completed. There is no unbridged gaps on this road but some wooden bridges exist which are not suitable for heavy traffic. There is a proposal to replace them. There is, however, no interruption of traffic in any part of the year.

3. *Jogbani-Kalabalua-Sarsi-Kursela Road.*—The road has been provincialised and has three sections—(1) From Jogbani to Kalabalua, (2) Kalabalua to Sarsi, (3) Sarsi to Kursela. There were many gaps in this road. The major bridges have already been completed and eight more bridges remain to be constructed. The road is, therefore, used only in fair weather between Mirganj and Jogbani.

4. *Purnea-Dhamdaha-Rupauli Road.*—The construction work of this road has been completed. There was an age-old ferry at Dhamdaha *ghat* on the river Kosi which has now ceased to function with the construction of a bridge. The road has now become all-weather road.

5. *Purnea-Murliganj Road.*—This road was sanctioned with black-topped road up to 18 miles and the remaining 14 miles are *katcha.* Entire 18 miles according to the estimate had been black-topped. Two bridges have already been completed and work on another bridge at Kushadhar is in progress. At present there is a ferry at Kushahahat. More bridges remain to be constructed on this road.

6. *Katihar-Manihari Road.*—Entire 16 miles length of the road was previously sanctioned as *katcha* road A bridge has recently been constructed at 12 miles of this road. The road is a fair-weather road.

7. *Forbesganj-Narpatganj Road.*—This road connects Saharsa with Forbesganj. Metalling has been done in the entire length of this road. The road passes across the drainage of the country and there are many bridges. The existing wooden bridges will be replaced in due course.

8. *Kishanganj-Bahadurganj Road.*—This is an important road. This road also passes across the drainage of the country and there were many gaps. Three gaps have been bridged up by wooden bridges. Three more gaps remain to be bridged up including the one over river Mahananda at Mauzabarighat. The road has been metalled from other side of Mahananda to Bahadurganj and black-topping will be done shortly. The portion from Kishanganj to Mahananda has been provincialised later on and work in this portion will be taken up shortly.

9. *Amaur-Baisi Road.*—The entire length has been black-topped but there remain two unbridged gaps which are proposed to be bridged up very shortly.

10. *Araria-Jokihat-Palasi Road.*—This road will connect the impassable and difficult corner of the district as there was neither road nor any railway in this area.

11. *Palasi-Terhagachi Road.*—This road has been provincialised. It passes through the jute-growing area. Work on this road has also been taken up.

12. *Gulabbagh-Birpur Road.*—This road has also been provincialised for the development of roads in jute-growing area.

13. *Ganga-Darjeeling Road.*—This is a National Highway and the entire length has been black-topped. There were two gaps on this road, one at Hizla and the other at Dingrahaghat over the river Mahananda which have not been bridged.

14. *Phulwaria-Kursela Road.*—This road is also a National Highway no. 31. The road has also been taken up. The sanction of bridge over Kosi at Kursela on Phulwaria-Kursela Road yet remains to be sanctioned. After completion of this road and the bridge there will be a good many metalled roads. Development of roads, however, is poor in eastern Purnea, i.e., on south of Ganga-Darjeeling Road and east of Purnea-Katihar-Manihari Roads. It is expected that roads in this area will be taken up during the Third Five Year Plan.

15. *Amaur-Bahadurganj Road.*—This road has been provincialised. The work on this road has been taken up recently.

District Board Roads.—The District Board maintains 30½ miles metalled road, 2.759 miles unmetalled and 482½ miles village roads. All the important roads of the district are now maintained by the Public Works Department. The metalled portions are in patches and are parts of unmetalled roads. Some of the important roads of the District Board are as follows:—

(1) Purnea-Abadpur—16 miles.

(2) Basantipur-Patherdewa—9 miles.

(3) Kishanganj-Dighalbank—4 miles.

(4) Purnea-Basantpur—15 miles.

(5) Purnea-Karealpur—23 miles.

(6) Katihar-Hyatpur—26 miles.

(7) Baisa-Araria—11 miles.

(8) Basantpur-Asma—23 miles.
(9) Khagra-Mazkuri—32 miles.
(10) Kishanganj-Phansidewa—24 IIB type.
Tilua to Nanagaon *hat*—22 III type.
(11) Khagra-Goagaon—16 miles.
(12) Araria-Sultanpur—19 miles.
(13) Maurighat-Bansi—20 miles.
(14) Sikti *via* Kuari-Sonapur—24 miles.
(15) Gorial Factory-Sokmia—28 miles
(16) Pathia-Akbarpur—14 miles.
(17) Kursela-Rupouli—17 miles.
(18) Simraha Rly-Mohatoa—19 miles
(19) Kharkhari-Nepal—21 miles.
(20) Khariea-Kathigola—14 miles

The average expenditure on original works from the District Board during the years 1954—59 has been Rs 1,13,234 and on repairs Rs 5,50,292

The annual expenditure of District Board for maintenance of roads during the years following 1953 are as follows -

	Rs
1953-54	6,00,138
1954-55	8,48,239
1955-56	7,02,317
1956-57	6,23,918
1957-58	7,51,487
1958-59	3,55,060

Municipal Roads.

The Municipalities of Purnea, Katihar, Forbesganj and Kishanganj maintain roads in their own municipal areas.

Purnea Municipality.—With the limited financial resources the Municipality is not in a position to maintain the roads satisfactorily. In 1959-60 the total length of metalled road was 16 miles, unmetalled 34 miles. The unmetalled roads are mostly *katcha* and during rainy season their condition is miserable. A sum of Rs. 32,766 was spent for the maintenance of roads in 1959-60.

No expansion work was undertaken for the development of roads during the First Five-Year Plan. A sum of Rs. 1,17,724 has been sanctioned for the development of roads in the Second Five-Year Plan.

Katihar Municipality.—The Katihar Municipality maintains a total length of 13.49 miles metalled roads, 7.13 unmetalled roads and 0.45 miles tar-macadamised roads. The condition of the unmetalled road is very poor. Due to paucity of income the Municipality is not in a position to improve the roads. A sum of Rs. 35,963 has been sanctioned during Second Five-Year Plan for the development of roads. The expenditure incurred by the Municipality in 1959-60 was Rs. 31,850.

Forbesganj Municipality.—The total length of roads of this Municipality was 12.34 miles in 1959-60 out of which 7.6 miles were metalled and 5.28 miles unmetalled. In the same year total expenditure of the Municipality on roads was Rs 24,529. The total number of roads is 40 out of which seven were improved at a cost of Rs. 24,752 during the First Five-Year Plan. The condition of the unmetalled roads is poor

Kishanganj Municipality.—The Kishanganj Municipality maintains a total length of 13 miles in 1959-60 out of which 6.5 miles are metalled, 3.14 miles tar-macadamised and 3.84 miles unmetalled roads. The total expenditure on roads including the Government grant was Rs. 24,957 in 1959.

Village Roads.

The District Board maintains 482 miles of village roads. Since the starting of the *Gram Panchayats,* construction of roads in the villages has been taken up by some of the *panchayats.* The total length of roads made by the *Gram Panchayat* is not known. Besides, the Union Boards maintain a certain length of village roads. There are also a certain length of village roads in big villages where the *kacharies* of big *zamindars* existed or where some influential men lived at one time. Every village has a certain length of track within the village habitation but the condition of the track is such that they could hardly be called a road. Considering that the district has got 4,553 villages the length of village road is absolutely negligible and their condition miserable. It is not that a bullock-cart could reach the door of every household. In the rainy season it becomes a problem to go out of the villages.

Very few villages are connected with the main public road. Although the countryside is plain and it is easier to take carts or other vehicles in this district, once the crops are cut, it is a

problem to take the village produce to the primary markets. Villages are mostly ill served with roads excepting the fortunate ones that are located by the side of the public roads.

TRANSPORT VEHICLES.

With the recent development scheme, the importance of bullock-cart which was a universal conveyance in the village has gone down. In spite of it, it will remain for long time the main mode of transport in the district. Because this is the only conveyance through which the requirements of the villagers could be met easily and at a cheaper rate No improvement in the mechanism has taken place. It is used both for carrying goods and passengers *Tapparwala* bullock-carts which have covers are still popular but their number has decreased

Shampanis are commonly used for the transport of passengers. Horses are also used for transporting goods But they are few in number.

The number of bicycle has been increasing rapidly It is considered as poor men's car. It is found that in the village and town the hawkers use cycles for carrying different commodities for sale in the different markets. It has not been possible to get even an approximate number of cycles in the district

The number of registered carts during the year 1959 60 was as follows:—

(1) No. of bullock-carts registered—3,610 (average).

(2) No. of cycles registered—536 (average).

(3) No. of cycle rickshaws registered—408 (average).

(4) No. of Ekka registered—Nil.

But according to the assessment made by the District Board the number of bullock-carts is approximately 50 000. The number of cycles and *ghoragari* is approximately 1,000 and 200 respectively in the district.

With the advancement of the modern means of transport, a great change has occurred in the mode of transport.

Though the number of trucks and cars have increased within the last twenty years but the increase is not rapid due to bad surface condition of the roads.

The maintenance cost of an automobile vehicle is very high. But with the improvement of communication and bridging up of the important gaps, automobile traffic is on the increase.

As regards cars, old model cars and jeep vehicles are very popular on account of bad condition of the roads. Besides private power vehicles, public motor vehicles, carrier trucks or passenger buses play an important role. The first fleet of buses were allowed to run only on Ganga-Darjeeling Road, Purnea-Dhamdaha and Purnea-Kasba Roads, etc. The condition of the roads and particularly the bridges and culverts stood on the way of the expansion of bus and truck traffic. With the improvement of roads and their expansion, this traffic has gone up. Long distance buses are now plying from Purnea, Katihar and Kishanganj.

The truck carries a good percentage of the clearance of the village produce and particularly jute The number of registered public carrier trucks was 224 in 1959 but this is not an index. A large number of trucks registered in other districts and other States particularly West Bengal are constantly running through this district. The two important roads, viz, Assam Access Link and Ganga-Darjeeling Road are in constant use by such trucks. A casual visit to any of the important trade centre of the district, viz., Katihar, Purnea, Thakurganj, Arariya, Jogbani, Forbesganj, Banmankhi and Kishanganj will show what important part these public carriers play. A recent development is the addition of some important trucks that will bring goods from Calcutta to trade centres of Purnea district. The main routes covered by public motor vehicles are as follows:—

(1) Purnea-Katihar.
(2) Purnea-Karhagola.
(3) Purnea-Kishanganj
(4) Katihar-Jogbani.
(5) Karhagola-Katihar.
(6) Purnea Rupauli.
(7) Kursela-Katihar.
(8) Bausi-Karhagola.
(9) Purnea-Sonaili.
(10) Purnea-Amour.
(11) Katihar-Bhimnagar.
(12) Katihar-Rautahat.
(13) Karhagola-Banmankhi.
(14) Kursela-Jogbani *via* Sarsi.
(15) Forbesganj-Birpur.

(16) Forbesganj-Rupali.
(17) Forbesganj-Bhimnagar.
(18) Kishanganj-Powakhli.
(19) Kishanganj-Bahadurganj.
(20) Purnea-Barhara.

Statement showing the number of different kinds of motor vehicles on road for the last 10 years and fresh registration of motor vehicles is given below:—

Year	Bus	Trucks public and private	Cars and jeeps.	Motor cycles	Auto-rick shaws	Total.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1950	20	32	215	21		288
1951 .	22	46	210	27	.	305
1952 .	28	117	118	26		289
1953 .	34	139	194	31		398
1954 .	42	94	177	28		341
1955 ..	56	227	235	40		558
1956 .	56	205	231	65		557
1957 . .	64	237	253	68	..	622
1958 .	66	264	234	77	.	641
1959 .. .	102	324	224	124	.	774

RAILWAYS.

Regarding railways the last *District Gazetteer* (1911) mentions as follows:—

"The Bihar section of the Eastern Bengal State Railway from Parbatipur traverses the south of the district from Kachna near the border of Dinajpur to Katihar (31 miles from Kachna), and thence runs due south for 23 miles to Manihari Ghat on the Ganges.* This section, which was formerly known as the Purnea section of the Assam-Bihar State Railway, was opened to traffic in 1887. From Manihari Ghat a ferry steamer runs to Sakrigali

*On the creation of Pakistan, a portion of this section Parbatipur has gone over to East Pakistan.

Ghat on the other side of the river, and from the latter *ghat* there is a branch line to Sahibganj, which keeps up connection with the Loop Line of the East Indian Railway system From Katihar the Barauni-Katihar branch of the Tirhut section of the Bengal and North-Western Railway runs, parallel to the Ganges, to Kursela, a distance of 24 miles There is thus a railway line throughout the whole of the south of the district from Kachna to Kursela, 55 miles in length. The Kosi is spanned near Kursela by railway bridge which is an excellent piece of engineering work, and there is another fine bridge over the Mahananda near Barsoi.

"In the east and west of the district two branches of the Eastern Bengal State Railway run north from the Parbatipur-Katihar line. To the east there is a Branch, known as the Barsoi-Kishanganj branch, from Barsoi junction to Kishanganj (35 miles long). It is proposed to extend this line to Maheshi *via* Kaliaganj and thence to Titalya and Jalpaiguri To the west another branch line, known as the Kosi branch, runs north-west from Katihar to Forbesganj (68 miles). Till a few years ago there was a continuation of this latter line as far as Anchra Ghat on the Kosi river, but the constant shifting of that river led to its abandonment, as in the rains the embankment was breached by floods and the traffic in the cold weather was too small to pay for its maintenance An extension from Forbesganj to Nepalganj on the Nepal border is now (1908) under construction.

"In the south-east of the district an important new line of railway is under construction from Katihar to Godagari on the Ganges This line will pass through the Purnea district for 16 miles, run through the centre of the Malda district for a distance of 89 miles, and meet the Ganges nearly opposite the terminus of the Murshidabad branch of the Eastern Bengal State Railway at Lalgola."

The new railway lines which were constructed since 1911 are as follows:—

A new metre gauge section known as the Purnea-Murliganj in Saharsa district along with a metre gauge branch

line up to Beharigan in Saharsa district was constructed in 1928 and a portion of this line from Purnea to Banmankhi (22.62 miles) was opened to goods traffic from September, 1928. The remaining portion of this section, i.e., from Banmankhi to Murliganj (12.18) was opened to goods traffic just after one year. The passenger traffic of the entire section was opened from March, 1929 and from Banmankhi to Beharigan from November, 1929. Remodelling of Purnea station yard was done in 1931-32. Some additions were made in 1958 to Purnea Railway station The improvement in the permanent way of 14 55 miles by replacing 41½ lbs with 50 lbs rails on the Katihar-Manihari Ghat was completed also in the same year

After the partition of India in 1947 it became necessary for linking the State of West Bengal with the north portion of West Bengal, Bihar and Assam by an all India Rail route A new route was opened *via* Manihari Ghat and Katihar on the then existing line up to Kishanganj and from Kishanganj to Siliguri by the conversion of narrow gauge by metre gauge line * The distance from Siliguri to Fakiragram in West Bengal was linked by new construction on certain places *via* Duars and this line was joined right up to Amingaon The portion of the railway line which was constructed by the Assam Rail Line Project was taken over by the Assam Railway with effect from 16th November, 1950.

Work for relaying of 35 5 miles (main line) and 2 3 miles (siding) with 60 lbs rails between Barsoi to Kishanganj section were completed during the year 1951-52. Certain improvements to Barsoi railway yard were taken up in 1951-52 for the quicker running of the trains Some of the improvements to the then existing line capacity were undertaken during the course of the year 1954-55. Some of the important items taken up for development and flood control project were—

(1) Manihari—Yard arrangements—Line capacity work for development of Sakrigali-Manihari route.

(2) Barsoi-Siliguri Jn. section—Increasing length of loops at 12 stations.

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*A section of D H Railway on narrow gauge from Kishanganj to Siliguri had been opened earlier. In 1941 the narrow gauge was converted to metre gauge from Kishanganj to Galgalia In 1948 49 the narrow gauge line was completely converted into metre gauge and then the entire length from Kishanganj to Siliguri was thus connected by metre gauge line.

(3) Work in connection with Kosi Barrage scheme.

(4) The work connected with the running of longer trains between Katihar and Alipur Duar section in Assam was completed during the year 1954-55 making it possible to run goods trains of 60 wagons between Katihar and Siliguri Jn. With a view to increase traffic load and its quick clearance a preliminary survey for doubling the line between Katihar and Barsoi Jn. was also undertaken during the year 1955-56 and completed in the same year.

With the opening of the Assam Link route *via* Manihari Ghat and Katihar and consequent on the necessity of increasing the amenities of passengers many construction works were undertaken in hand during the year 1950-51 These consisted of constructions of three sheds on Island Platforms nos. 1 and 2, 4, 5 and 6 at Katihar which were taken in hand in 1950-51 and completed during the year 1951-52.

In addition to the above, extension of ladies waiting room at Katihar was done during the same year. Extension of shed over the Island platform at Barsoi by 110′ was completed during the year 1951-52. Construction of the over-bridge at Purnea connecting the main Island platform was taken in 1951-52

In addition a new railway line known as Kumedpur Barsoi-Radhikapur-Biral section was opened to traffic to connect certain portion of West Bengal in 1959 It enters Purnea district at the railway station Khurial and leaves it at Barsoi Junction. Only nine miles of this section falls in Purnea district.

*North East Frontier Railway.**

There are two railway systems functioning in Purnea district since 1958, viz , North East Frontier Railway and the North Eastern Railway. In Purnea district the route mileage of the North East Frontier Railway is longer than the North Eastern Railway. Four sections of this railway run in the Purnea district. The main line (Calcutta-Manihari Ghat-Katihar-Mal Jn.) enters Purnea at Galgalia in Kishanganj subdivision at a distance of 28 miles from Siliguri and leaves Purnea at Manihari Ghat at a distance of 151 miles from Siliguri. Due to transfer of some portions of the Kishanganj subdivision to West Bengal in view of the recommendation of the State Reorganisation Commission in 1956, some of the railway stations previous on the

*Some recent statistics of the important stations are given at the end of the Chapter.

section of the main line in Purnea district have gone over to West Bengal. As Mahananda river was taken as the boundary and the river has a zigzag course, there has been a peculiar intermingling of the railway stations in Bihar and West Bengal. After five railway stations in Purnea district, viz, Galgalia, Pipraikan, Thakurganj, Taibpur and Pothia, the next five stations from Alubari Road to Panjipara fall in West Bengal Again the next station Kishanganj falls in Bihar and then from the very next station Hatwar to Dalkolha on the way to Katihar five railway stations are in West Bengal From Telta the line again passes in Bihar up to Manihari Ghat. From Telta to Manihari Ghat i.e., thirteen stations, viz., Telta, Sudhani, Barsoi Jn., Mukuria, Salmari, Jhaua, Sonaili, Dandkhora, Katihar Jn, Mansahi, Mahiyarpur, Manihari and Manihari Ghat fall in Purnea So altogether 19 railway stations consisting of 95 miles of the main line of the North East Frontier Railway fall in Purnea.

Katihar-Jogbani section.—The Katihar-Purnea Jn Jogbani section entirely falls in the Purnea district The total length of this section is 67 miles and 15 railway stations viz, Katihar Jn., Dalan, Rautara, Ranipatra, Purnea Jn, Kasba, Garh Banaili, Jalalgarh, Kusiargaon, Arariya Court, Arariya, Simraha, Forbesganj, Bathnaha and Jogbani are in the section Jogbani on the border of Nepal is an important centre of communication of Biratnagar, and Dharan areas of the *Tarai* of Nepal

Singhbad-Katihar section—Only three railway stations of this section fall in Purnea. They are Katihar Jn, Kuretha and Lava. From Kumedpur the line passes to West Bengal About 16 miles of this section fall in Purnea

Kumedpur-Biral section.—As stated before this line was opened to traffic in 1959. Only four railway stations, viz., Barsoi Jn, Mukuria, Azamnagar and Khurial fall in the district of Purnea. A total length of 14 miles of the section is in Purnea.

*North Eastern Railway**.—One main line and two branch lines of the North Eastern Railway run in Purnea The main line of the Barauni-Katihar section enters Purnea at the railway station Kursela at a distance of 88 miles from Barauni Junction in Monghyr district Five railway stations, viz, Kursela, Bakhri, Karagola Road, Semapur and Katihar Junction fall in Purnea About 24 miles of this section are in Purnea. The Kosi is spanned near Kursela by a railway bridge. The bridge on the turbulent Kosi at an earlier time was considered as an excellent piece of engineering work. The bridge falls in Purnea district.

*Some recent statistics of the important sections are given at the end of the Chapter.

Purnea-Murliganj-Saharsa section.—This is the branch line of the North Eastern Railway with a mileage of 61 miles. This begins from Purnea Junction and leaves Purnea district after Jankinagar and enters Saharsa district. Six railway stations, viz., Purnea Junction, Purnea Court, Kirtyanandnagar, Sarsi, Banmankhi Jn. and Jankinagar fall in Purnea. About 31 miles of this section are in this district.

*Banmankhi-Biharigan*j *section.*—From Banmankhi Jn. there is another branch line of 17 miles which terminates at Behariganj in Saharsa district. Three railway stations excluding Banmankhi, viz., Aurahi, Barharakothi and Raghubanshnagar with a total length of about 15 miles fall in Purnea.

Thus the total route mileage covered by railways of the both North East Frontier Railway and North Eastern Railway in Purnea is about 262 as against 181 miles in 1911 when the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* was published.

Comparative annual figures from April to March of the years 1933-34 to 1956-57 of total passenger and goods traffic in number and maunds respectively originating from all the railway stations within the district of Purnea excluding the traffic relating to three stations Semapur, Kursela and Karagola are given below. The originating traffic of jute, the principal commodity of the district has been included in the total traffic but is also shown separately. Purnea district's output of jute is the largest in India. Jute's importance for foreign market is well known.

Year (from 1st April to 31st March)	Total number of passengers forwarded	Total weight of goods forwarded in mds.	Total weight of jute forwarded in mds.
1933-34 .	Not available	5,274,295	3,073,573
1934-35 . .	Ditto .	5,999,803	2,414,075
1935-36 .. .	1,297,830	7,058,099	2,579,780
1936-37 .. .	1,432,588	7,757,826	3,370,406
1937-38 .. .	1,671,106	6,091,001	2,322,097
1938-39	1,489,027	5,005,295	2,084,108
1939-40 .. .	1,891,973	6,757,759	2,424,210
1940-41	1,926,667	6,202,927	1,770,045
1941-42		Not available.	
1942-43	1,321,769	4,021,877	949,856

Year (from 1st April to 31st March).	Total number of passengers forwarded.	Total weight of goods forwarded in mds.	Total weight of jute forwarded in mds.
1943-44	1,898,379	4,083,577	1,009,427
1944-45	2,195,932	5,060,732	1,503,297
1945-46	2,465,088	5,666,441	2,175,248
1946-47		Not available.	
For the period 15th August 1947 to 31st March 1948.	Not available	1,443,372	731,181
1947-48	Ditto ..	4,216,505	1,501,523
1948-49	2,974,757	5,174,0[illegible]1	2,006,749
1949-50 . ..	4,565,553	5,419,651	2,441,042
1950-51	5,024,235	6,188,280	3,128,875
1931-52		Not available.	
1952-53		Excluding the traffic of Katihar.	
1953-54	429,211	Not available	Not available.
1954-55	5,374,992	8,173,172	Ditto.
1955-56	5,215,531	9,691,674	Ditto.
1956-57	7,161,719	10,080,730	Ditto.

Development of Forbesganj and Kishanganj as Centres of Jute Trade.

Forbesganj is one of the best reputed centres of jute trade in Purnea. The gradual increase in the booking of the commodity from Forbesganj during the years 1935-36 to 1939-40 shows that there was also development in the production of the commodity within the area. The introduction of special rate by the railway administration is also partially responsible for the increase in the booking of jute traffic. It will be seen from the figures relating to the years 1940-41 to 1944-45 that it has suffered a set back bringing in decrease in booking of jute traffic mainly owing to the outbreak of the Second World War and the imposition of restrictions on the movement of jute traffic due to the acute shortage of wagons. Consequently the grower of jute had to grow less and there was also less booking of the commodity. It again had shown an increase in the traffic during 1945-46 which

was due to partial withdrawal of restriction in the free movement of traffic. There was also a fall in the booking of the commodity during 1949-50 which was due to partition as there was no direct route over Indian Union to and from Calcutta and Assam. With the opening of the Assam Link route *via* Maniharighat from 1950 there was a considerable increase in the booking of jute traffic which indicates that with the availability of port facilities in the movement of traffic by the all-India route the growers of jute were encouraged to improve their production. Facilities were also extended by the Government to grow more jute crop as the volume of jute traffic of East Bengal now East Pakistan was stopped consequent upon the partition of the country. Since then the jute traffic had started showing increase during the years 1950-51 to 1956-57 and it has still shown gradual increase.

Statement showing outward traffic of the commodity jute in maunds booked from the railway station Forbesganj during the years 1935-36 *to* 1956-57.

Name of the station	Years	Total outward weight of jute in maunds
Forbesganj	1935-36	501,393
	1936-37	596,072
	1937-38	390,187
	1938-39	569,595
	1939-40	560 134
	1940-41	363,552
	1941-42	Not available.
	1942-43	235,685
	1943-44	164,049
	1944-45	402,474
	1945-46	611 071
	1946-47	Not available.
	1947-48	Ditto.
	1948-49	Ditto
	1949-50	486,585
	1950-51	758,[illegible]96
	1951-52	646,718

Name of the station.	Years.	Total outward weight of jute in maunds
Forbesganj—*concld.*	1952-53	1,076,593
	1953-54	831,576
	1954-55	1,014,492
	1955-56	816,921
	1956-57	1,285,683
	1957-58	
	1958-59	
	1959-60	

Kishanganj is also one of the best centres of jute trade in the district of Purnea as it was in the past, and this also would be evident from a comparative study of the volume of jute traffic it dealt with in the past and at present shown in the following statement. The figures in the statement below will show that during the years prior to 1938 there was a heavy jute booking. This was due to the availability of all facilities for the free movement of commodities There was a slight decrease during the year 1938-39. Since 1939 there was a considerable decrease in the booking of jute traffic The decrease was due to the outbreak of war. Consequently free movement was restricted for utilisation of wagons for the movement of war traffic There was a considerable increase in the booking of the traffic since 1945 which was due to the availability of the wagons and also increase in the production. Since 1950 with the opening of Assam Link route there has been a considerable increase in the booking of jute traffic from Kishanganj as is shown in the following statement:—

Statement showing outward traffic of the commodity of jute in mds. booked from the railway station Kishanganj during the years 1935-36 *and* 1956-57.

Name of the station.	Years.	Total outward weight of jute in maunds.
Kishanganj ..	1935-36 ..	476,032
	1936-37 .	689,219
	1937-38 ..	486,563

Name of the station.	Years.		Total outward weight of jute in maunds.
	1938-39	..	332,076
	1939-40	..	236,023
	1940-41		276,869
	1941-42	..	Not available
	1942-43	.	122,097
	1943-44		152,651
	1944-45		282,816
	1945-46		362,655
	1946-47		Not available.
	1947-48		Ditto
	1948-49		Ditto.
	1949-50	.	355,251
	1950-51		447,923
	1951-52		502,252
	1952-53	.	
	1953-54		[illegible]98,832
	1954-55	.	768,263
	1955-56	.	773,789
	1956-57		1,017,225
	1957-58	.	.
	1958-59	..	.
	1959-60	..	..

KATIHAR AS AN INDUSTRIAL AND RAILWAY CENRTE.

Till 1947 Katihar Railway District was under the administrative control of Bengal and Assam Railway with the section (1) Katihar to Parbatipur (2) Katihar to Jogbani, (3) Katihar to Godagari Ghat and Katihar to Manihari Ghat. Prior to partition both passenger and goods traffic from Assam, North Bengal and North Bihar to Calcutta and *vice versa* used to move *via* Parbatipur. A portion of passenger traffic from North Bihar and part of North Bengal to Calcutta and *vice versa* also used to move *via* Godagari Ghat, Amnura and Manihari Ghat. The bulk of traffic from the north of Bihar, northern portion of Bengal and Assam

to the southern portion of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and *vice versa* used to pass *via* Katihar and as such its importance as junction station of both Bengal-Assam and Oudh-Tirhut Railways was very great. With the opening of Assam Railway in 1950 all traffic both passenger and goods from Assam, North Bengal and North Bihar to Calcutta and *vice versa* were diverted *via* Katihar and Manihari Ghat as the pressure on Katihar was very great and the movement of traffic was increasing daily it was felt necessary to effect improvement on many of the operational facilities by taking up construction, installation and re-modelling within the area of railway premises.

As a railway and industrial centre the importance of Katihar has been growing rapidly which may be seen from the movement of goods traffic originated from the point. Comparative figures of goods traffic originated at this point prior and after partition is given below.

Total originating goods traffic at Katihar.

	Forwarded weight in maunds.
1943-44	890.140
1944-45	948,630
1945-46	630,551
1946-47	Not available
1947-48	Not available.
1948-49	252,465
1949-50	527,057
1950-51	709,641
1951-52	574,520
1952-53	1,012,134
1953-54	1,504,825
1954-55	1,224,770
1955-56	1,451,938
1956-57	1,712,296
1957-58	
1958-59	
1959-60	

The comparative figures of the mill products of Katihar booked to the different places from this place are given below. It will be seen that the volume of traffic of all these commodities booked from Katihar up to 1940-41 seems to

be higher than those for the years 1944-45, 1945-46 and 1949-50 The reason for this was mainly due to the imposition of restriction in the movement of various commodities and want of raw materials during these years which was necessitated consequent upon the movement of the war traffic and subsequent partition of the country. Besides, there was also shortage in wagons due to war. The increase in the traffic was effected during the year 1945-46 when restriction in the movement of commodities was partially withdrawn and wagons were also available for their movement. There was decrease in the figures during the year 1949-50 due to the effect of partition, their being no direct route to and from Calcutta and Assam over till January, 1950. Due to the restriction in the free movement of traffic during the period from 15th August 1947 to January, 1950, the booking of these manufactured commodities was less compared to that of the years 1944-45 and 1945-46 which may be seen from the statement. Since 1950 while the rail route *via* Manihari Ghat was opened by the construction of Assam Rail Link, it started showing gradual increase in the booking of traffic from Katihar which may be seen from the following statement:—

Comparative figures of the commodities booked from Katihar to different places for the years 1937-38, 1938-39, 1940-41, 1944-45, 1945-46, 1949-50 *and* 1950-51.

Year.	Rice forwarded weight in mds.	Jute manufactured forwarded weight in mds.	Wheat flour forwarded weight in mds.	Mustard oil forwarded weight in mds.
1937-38	10.230	417,107	314,082	75,091
1938 39	14,500	395,812	484,674	77,679
1940 41	15,395	451,207	302,291	70,062
1944-45	13,500	223,610	43 706	5,012
1945 46	10,500	240 654	116,865	9,727
1949-50	2.298	198,039	2,624	.
1950-51	.	365,040	42,261	5,354
1951-52	..	..	..	..
1952-53	..	..	..	..
1953-54	..	..	..	..
1954-55	..	..	..	..
1956-57	..	..	..	..
1957-58	.	..	..	..
1959-60	..	..	..	..

Jogbani Railway Station.

Inward and outward traffic of both passengers and goods of Jogbani is considerable. It falls on the border of Nepal and so inward and outward traffic of *Tarai* areas of Nepal and India is

carried on through this station. The inward goods are iron, salt and coal and outward goods are rice, jute and timber. The outward and inward traffic along with earnings for the year 1959 is given below:—

Inward in mds.				Outward in mds.			Earnings in rupees.
C. P. goods.	Iron.	Salt.	Coal.	Rice.	Jute.	Timber.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
410,59	62,776	126,427	166,162	367,234	55,276	911,61	10,33.177

In 1959 the number of inward passengers was 169,277 and of outward 348,925 with a total earning of Rs. 7,95,288.

Role of Railways and Roads in the Economic Life of the People.

In Purnea district the development of roads is a very recent affair. The first route that was thrown open for bus services was Purnea-Dhamdaha route. For a long time there was a strong opposition from the District Board for throwing open the roads to heavy bus or truck traffic because of the weak culverts and bridges. The District Board was right in taking up this attitude as the depleted finances of the District Board did not allow them to carry out extending repairs to the roads or to strengthen the culverts. Even the Purnea-Katihar Road which was an all-weather metalled road was not black-topped till only very recently. Since 1948 the Public Works Department has taken up a considerable number of the roads hitherto maintained by the District Board, it was possible to carry out extending repairs and to strengthen the culverts of the roads.

Both roadways and railways have had their effect on the economic life of the people. Both the systems have contributed to a quicker transport of the produce. Although there is a sort of competition between the roadways and the railways there is ample scope for the development and extension of both of them.

A study of the bus routes in Purnea district will show that a large number of them do not run parallel to the railway lines and hence such buses cannot mean any competition with the railways. There is, however, competition so far as Katihar-Purnea-Arariya-Jogbani Road is concerned. On these routes there are both a large number of daily buses as well as train

services. Even then one can safely say that there is ample scope for expansion of both because the buses and the trains normally run congested. An example may be given. Passengers from Barauni side to Purnea can take off at Karhagola, take the bus and reach Purnea much earlier. The same passengers may also get down from the train at Katihar and go from Katihar to Purnea by bus. They can also travel by train *via* Katihar to Purnea and get down at Purnea railway station. Personal investigation shows that in spite of a large number of bus services from Karhagola to Purnea and from Katihar to Purnea, the trains from Katihar to Purnea seldom go uncongested.

So far as the goods traffic is concerned, public and private carriers definitely play a very useful part in the economic life of the district. They shift the commodities quicker and quick movement of the commodities and particularly jute is very important. There is always a difficulty in procuring wagons and the transport of the stuff from the railway station to the market or the godown by bullock-carts or by trucks is both dilatory and expensive.

The usefulness of the carrier truck in Purnea district is further illustrated by their contribution in facilitating the early steps for the implementation of Kosi Project. Purnea is now connected with Birpur which is a sort of headquarters of Kosi Project Zone *via* Bathnaha. It is the trucks and buses that carried quickly the goods and men that laid the foundation of the Kosi Project as the main zone of Kosi Project was not connected by the railways. Secondly, with the linking up of the two portions of West Bengal through Purnea district and the development of National Highway no. 31, we have a large number of buses and trucks travelling from places in West Bengal to Siliguri and Darjeeling through portions of Purnea district and Purnea district derives a definite advantage out of their running.

At the same time, the railway sections within Purnea district have their own importance which cannot be minimised. Any one who has spent a night at Katihar railway station as the Editor did to watch the trends will testify that Katihar railway station never sleeps and a large number of important trains pass through Katihar in the night. It is understood that 56 trains pass through Katihar every single day. At the time of reaping of the crops and when the tea district in Assam require labourers, the trains to Katihar and beyond are overcrowded with labourers from different parts of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. As a matter of fact, if such labourers do not go to Purnea at the time of reaping of the crops, the crops particularly jute will not be reaped. If

the railway did not carry the overload of labourers to the tea estates, the tea estates would have been in serious difficulties and no bus services even if there were good roads could possibly fill up the gap of the railways.

WATER TRANSPORT.

River-borne traffic was chief means of communication before the railways. Francis Buchanan who travelled the district of Purnea in 1809-10 had left an important account regarding the water communication of the district. Regarding Ganga which he mentioned by the name of the Bhagirathi he states "at all seasons of the year it is navigable in the largest vessels which the native use, and which are of very considerable burthen, although they draw little water." (*An Account of the District of Purnea in 1809-10, page 10.*) Further he mentions, "The Burhi Ganga is a very considerable branch, is navigable at all seasons, and is the route by which trade passes to Gorgurbah and so up the Kalindi." Regarding the Kosi it is mentioned that "Boats of four or five hundred men can frequent this part of the river at all seasons but larger cannot pass in the spring, owing to a want of sufficient water". The important marts on this river were Nathpur, Shahebganj, Raniganj and Rampur from where goods were exported and imported by the river Kosi

Buchanan's reference to Kosi river makes out that Kosi was an important waterway for communication. It, however, appears that Kosi has been a shifting river and from time to time she has shifted her course. Kosi floods have also been abnormal from a long time past. The importance of the river Kosi as a means of communication was early realised by the British administration and it was concluded that the river has to be trained before she could be fully exploited for communication purposes and for being a source of benefit instead of a source of evil because of her floods. As early as 1891 the Government of India had appreciated the problem and had sought the co-operation of the Nepal Government.

Foreign Department Proceedings Ext. A June, 1891, nos. 34—38 in the National Achives, New Delhi refer to the proposal for the construction of a *bund* in Nepal territory to keep Kosi river within its limit. The Prime Minister of Nepal had agreed to co-operate and there is a telegram from the Resident, dated the 26th May, 1891 indicating the acceptance of the Government of Nepal for the construction of the *bund*. The Collector of Purnea was actively associated with this proposal and had sent a map and a report on the subject. The Project was,

however, not implemented. The multi-purpose project of Kosi has, it is true, been only recently taken up in all seriousness following an intensive investigation in 1947. Nevertheless, this early appreciation of the problem of Kosi shows her importance as a means of communication to the district of Purnea.

The importance of the waterways continued after Buchanan's visit in spite of the development of roadways during this period. Boats and steamers carried a very great percentage of goods and passenger traffic. The waterways were invaluable for goods traffic particularly. Big boats and steamers used to pass both ways on the river Ganga which had Karhagola and Manihari, two important places of call in Purnea district.

In this connection, the services of the Indian General Steam Navigation, Company, later the New Rivers Company and then River Steam Navigation Company has to be mentioned. The Indian General Navigation and Railway Company, Limited and the River Steam Navigation Company, Limited jointly operated river services on Ganga river connecting Calcutta with the riverine stations in Bihar and the United Provinces as far as Buxar on the river Ganga and Burhaj on the river Gogra. These river services had linked up Bihar with West Bengal, Assam Cachar and East Bengal. Manihari particularly was one of the important stations. The service was first inaugurated in December, 1844 and a journey from Calcutta to Allahabad used to take a little over 3 weeks.

This service had a natural setback with the development of the E. I. Railway Greater attention was paid to the North Bank and then to Assam and East Bengal where the tea and Jute industries were showing signs of development. A considerable part of jute grown in Purnea used to be carried every year by this service to Calcutta. Even after the amalgamation of the two Companies, namely, the India General Company and the River Steam Navigation Company, the service could not run economically. The creation of Pakistan became a problem Heavy tapping of the river for irrigation purposes made navigation difficult in the dry season months resulting in the Bhagirathi river which afforded a much shorter route to and from Calcutta being closed except in the height of the rainy season. On the ground of continued loss, the Company closed the concern in 1957 which has affected the flow of business through waterways.

Regarding water communication the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911) mentions as follows:—

"The river steamers plying on the Ganges touch at Manihari in the south of the district, but there is

> no steamer traffic on the rivers flowing through the district. Both the main Kosi and the Damdaha Kosi, as far as Raniganj, are navigable for large boats. Country boats can also ascend the Kala Kosi as far as Hardah bridge, where the river is crossed by the Ganges-Darjeeling Road, and can go up the Saura as far as Captain Ghat at Purnea. With the advent of railways, this traffic has largely fallen off. Still, a certain number of boats ply on the Damdaha Kosi and take grain to Sahibganj for the Ganges river steamers. Boats also formerly plied on the Mahananda up as far as Kaliaganj and down through Malda to the Ganges. Now they prefer to transfer their cargoes to the railway at Dalkolha or Barsoi Junction."

The importance of the river-borne traffic of the river Ganga had been realised by the National Council of Applied Economcis who had made recently a survey of the traffic of the Ganga. In the report it was mentioned that with the mounting pace of industrialisation in the Bihar, W. Bengal and Uttar Pradesh regions bordering the Ganga, Bihar would continue to be the transport cushion for rail and road transit traffic to U. P., Assam and Nepal and if both road and rail routes in Bihar get congested and clogged the escape would be by river. The council recommended for the resumption of the steamer services which had been recently closed. Besides, other measures the Council considered desirable are the co-ordination of rail and water transport at Manihari in Purnea and Rajmahal in Santhal Parganas by introduction of through booking, provision of workshop facilities for repairs of steamer, the placing of all categories of transport under one Ministry in States concerned.

The present picture is that with the development of railways and roads and advent of motor trucks, internal waterways communication has dwindled to almost non-existence and there is practically no waterway traffic except during the four months of the rainy season, when some boats do ply on the Dhamdaha, Kosi Kalikosi up to Katihar and Mahananda.

Changes in the course of Kosi and changes caused in the low level of the river courses by 1934 Earthquake have been other contributory causes of the fall in waterways communication. Low depth of water has tended growth of weeds making navigation all the more dangerous. Purnea district has a notoriously static growth of water hyacinths in the shallow beds of the river. They choke up the flow of the water and impede the movement of

boats. Boat traffic has suffered a further fall after the partition of India as boats cannot go to Calcutta direct now. Kursela Ghat, Karhagola Ghat, Manihari Ghat are the important ferries for goods traffic. If inter-state traffic in jute, tobacco and food materials through waterways have declined that is due to various causes. It is a common saying that Purnea is famous for *ghat, pat* and *hat* and the truth of the proverb is still there.

Ferries.

Buchanan in his book *An Account of the District of Purnea* published in 1809-10 mentions that "no regulation respecting ferries seems to be observed. The *Darogahs* of the *Thanas* in some places, indeed, compel the ferrymen to enter into agreements for the due execution of their office; but as I find that on frontier rivers the prerogative is disputed with eagerness, I presume that this anxiety after trouble chiefly arises from a desire to share in the fees of office, and I am pretty confident that it does not extend to any superintendency of the stipulations in the agreement being executed.

"When troops march, the native officers of police call on the *zamindars* to furnish proper boats; but on common occasions everything is left to the *Majhi's* discretion, and the boats are very unsafe, and generally much overloaded. On the Ganges and Kosi the only proper boats are large fishing *Dinggis* which as I have said are very safe, if not overloaded. On smaller rivers single canoes are most commonly in use, but on the Mahananda and Nagar small boats of 40 or 50 *mans* are employed Only one of these is, however, allowed for each ferry, so that they cannot be united to make a float for conveying horses or carts."

In the present century the road traffic during the rainy season is mostly dislocated and ferries are provided by District Board, on gaps in important roads. Small country boats are used for carrying pedestrians, bullock-carts, cars, trucks and lorries, etc. The *ghats* are mostly owned by District Board.

The *ghats* are classified into 3 classes on the amount of which they are leased out, as detailed below:—

Class I, Rs. 2,000 and above.

Class II, Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,999.

Class III, below Rs. 500.

The District Board maintains now altogether 53 ferries which brought a sum of Rs. 66,503 in 1959. The important ferries are the Karhagola Ghat of the river Ganga and the

Mauzbora Ghat on the Mahananda from where a road goes to Kishanganj to Bahadurganj.

Boats.

Francis Buchanan has given a comprehensive description of boats used as a conveyance of goods in Purnea. The boats still have the same nomenclature and serve as a means of water transport especially in the rainy season. The *Ulka* are the most important and carry from 200 to 1,500 maunds. In the eastern low parts of the district the most common boats of burthen are called *Koshas* and have the capacity to carry from 50 maunds to 100 burden. The boats used for floating timber are called *Malni* or *Maluhi*.. They are long, low and narrow at both ends *Dingis* are open boats used for fishing, for carrying goods from one market to another and for ferries. The *Pansi* is shaped like a smâll *ulak*. They could carry from 50 to 100 maunds.

CIVIL AVIATION.

There are three fair-weather small landing grounds in the district. They are in Purnea, Katihar and Kishanganj. Small planes carrying Ministers and officers from Patna usually land on these landing grounds. No air service exists in Purnea. Prior to 1958 there was Freighter Dakota service from Purnea to Calcutta and it helped good deal in transportation of materials but this service has ceased to function since 1958. The ex-landlord of Kursela Shri Raghubansh Prasad Singh has his own private landing ground at Kursela which is also a fair-weather landing ground.

REST HOUSES, DAK AND INSPECTION BUNGALOWS.

It is interesting to note that Buchanan travelled in the district of Purnea in 1808 and mentioned in his book *An Account of the District of Purnea* published in 1809-10 that "in this district there is some accommodation for the traveller, besides the casual hospitality or charity of richmen. Those who retail provision (*Modis*), as I have mentioned may be said to keep inns, and they are much more numerous than towards the east. There are in the southern parts of the district some of the kind of inns called *Bhatiyar Khanahs,* where strangers are accommodated with lodging and food. In order to exclude the rabble, the price is high, and damsels attend to supply the wants of the guests, to whom it is supposed that they are so kind as to refuse no favour."

There are 19 Dak and Inspection Bungalows and Rest Houses in the district, for the convenience of the travelling

public. There is one Circuit House in the Purnea town maintained by the P. W. D. and is meant for touring high officials. The Dak and Inspection Bungalows are maintained by the District Board. There are 13 District Board Inspection Bungalows in the district, they are located at Basantpur, Amur, Forbesganj, Bahadurganj, Manihari, Pobakhari, Thakurganj, Raniganj, Arariya, Dhamdaha, Kursakauta, Barai and Joki. The other three are Dak-*cum*-Inspection Bungalows, viz., Purnea, Katihar and Kishanganj and the rest three, viz., at Kamalpur, Beri and Pohara are Rest Houses. Besides, the Public Works Department has recently constructed an Inspection Bungalow at Arariya. The inns mentioned by Buchanan ceased to function.

There are eight *Dharmashalas* in the district. Three are at Purnea, two at Katihar and Forbesganj, Arariya and Kishanganj each has one. Stay for a limited period to sojourners is allowed freely. They are built mainly by the generosity of rich men.

The existing Rest Houses which include Dak and Inspection Bungalows and *Dharmashalas*, etc., cannot be said to be adequate. The majority of such bungalows is meant for the Government employees or the employees of the District Board. There has been an enormous increase of Government officers and their staff that have to tour constantly. As a result, the pressure of the want of proper Rest Houses for the other travelling public, namely, non-officials, has been acute. It is difficult for the travelling representatives of various concerns that have to tour within the district to contact their customers to obtain a proper roof over their head in the night. There are no youth hostels either.

With the development of the Kosi Project the number of non-officials that have to visit Purnea district for various reasons has gone up considerably. There are no proper hotels or Boarding Houses in the district. Most of the railway stations are without a proper waiting room. Even Katihar railway station lacks well furnished and comfortable waiting rooms and Retiring Rooms.

In this connection, mention should be made of the fact that with the development of the Kosi Project and the road and air traffic to Kathmandu from Biratnagar, there is the possibility of certain amount of tourism being developed. Royal Nepal Airways now run their plane service from Biratnagar to Kathmandu. Birpur which may be described as the headquarters of Kosi Development Project is constantly being reached through Purnea by tourists and other concerned. But for a

development of tourism, want of proper Rest Houses will be an impediment. For all these purposes, it may be said that Purnea is rather backward in providing facilities for the touring public.

POSTAL COMMUNICATION.

Purnea as a postal district was a part of Bhagalpur Postal Division till 1954 when a separate Purnea Postal Division was constituted with headquarters at Purnea. The Superintendent of Post Offices with headquarters at Purnea is at the head of the Postal Department, which is under a Central Ministry. The Superintendent of Post Offices, Purnea Postal Division, is assisted by four Inspectors, all of whom had headquarters at Purnea.

The total length of postal communciation in 1959 was 1,104 miles as against 403 miles as mentioned in the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* published in 1911.

The Purnea Post Office is the Head Post Office. There are 36 sub-post offices and 289 branch post offices. The sub-post offices are at Araria, Araria railway station, Merygganj, Shrinagar, Bahadurganj. Banaili, Banmankhi, Barharakkythi. Damdaha, Barsoi Hat, Amour, Bathnaha, Bhawanipur, Rajdham, Forbesganj, Balua Bazar, Narpatganj, Surpatganj, Forbesganj Station Road, Garh Banaili, Jalalgarh, Jogbani, Kasba, Katihar, Kishanganj. Kishanganj Bazar, Manihari, Ranipatra, Semapur Factory, Sonaili and Thakurganj. The sub-post offices in Purnea town are Bhatta Bazar, Gulabbagh, Khajanchi Hat, Purnea City, and Purnea Court. The name of Semapur Factory owes its origin to a sugar factory which was started at Semapur some years back but since has been closed down. The majority of the sub-post offices are served direct by mail communication with railway mail service (R. M. S.) and few are served by roads through motor buses and runners.

The 289 branch post offices are located at the bigger villages and serve the village neighbourhood. Some of them are located at villages where there are police *thanas*.

At all the post offices including branch post offices the ordinary postal transaction including money orders are conducted. Some of the sub-post offices have sections for savings bank operation and for selling National Savings Certificates. It is unfortunate that there should not be more post offices as a result of which many of the villages do not get more than one delivery in a week. The ideal is to have a post office at every village which has a population of 2,000 persons and Purnea has fulfilled this condition. With the expansion of the Multi-purpose Kosi

Project there will have to be a further development of postal communication.

Purnea district is a heavy cash collecting and issuing office. It has been observed elsewhere that a large number of labourers come every year to Purnea district for harvesting their crops and particularly jute. As a result, a large number of money orders emanate from Purnea district for Darbhanga, Saran and Shahabad districts in Bihar and Ballia, Gazipur and Garhwal districts in Uttar Pradesh. The ratio of money order issued and paid is roughly 6:1 if the weekly average figures of 1959 are taken into account. For the same period the ratio for savings bank deposit and withdrawal works out to 2:1 and that of National Savings Certificate issued and discharged 4:1. The following statistics indicate the volume of postal business done in 1959:—

Average weekly no. of articles delivered—3,11,587.
Average weekly no. of money orders issued—4,96,215.
Average weekly no. of money orders paid—85,143.
Average weekly no. of Savings Bank deposits—24,345.
Average weekly no. of Savings Bank withdrawals—15,336.
Average weekly no. of National S. C. issued—3,050.
Average weekly no. of National S. C. discharged—765.

The following post offices of Purnea district are on the border of Nepal and they are widely used for the neighbouring villages in Nepal for postal communication. Such post offices are at Jogbani and Galgalia. The Jogbani Post Office has jurisdiction over the three districts (viz., Morang, Dhankota and Bhojpur). While the Galgalia Post Office has jurisdiction over Jhapa district of the Eastern Nepal. Recently, the Biratnagar Post Office (Nepal) has started functioning and all daks from Jogbani are sent to that post office, but insured covers, money orders, registration and parcels are not handed at Biratnagar and so they have to be handed over at Jogbani.

Telegraph.

There are now 17 postal telegraph offices in the district as against 8 in 1911. They are, viz., Purnea, Araria, Durgaganj, Banaili, Banmankhi, Barsoi Ghat, Forbesganj, Garh-Banaili, Jogbani, Kasba, Jalalgarh, Katihar, Kishanganj, Manihari, Purnea City and Kishanganj Bazar. Besides these, Shrinagar Branch Office, Meryganj Branch Office, Damdaha B. O., Amour B. O., Balua Bazar B. O., Palasi B. O., Narpatganj B. O., Surpatganj B. O. and Araria railway station are phonocum combined post and telegraph branch offices. Some of the big railway stations, viz., Katihar, Purnea, Forbesganj, Kishanganj and Banmankhi have telegraph offices.

Telephone.

Telephone services exist in the municipal towns of Purnea, Katihar, Forbesganj and Kishanganj. There are 13 public call offices at Purnea, Araria, Araria railway station, Banmankhi, Barsoi Hat, Bathnaha, Forbesganj, Jogbani, Kasba, Katihar, Kishanganj, Ranipatra and Sonaili. The opening up of the telephone services have been a great boon to the merchants and particularly those who deal in jute. Trunk lines from the jute centres like Forbesganj and Kishanganj with Calcutta usually remain crowded.

Radio and Wireless.

There is no radio or wireless station in the district. The State in the Police Department maintains wireless services at the four subdivisional headquarters for administrative purposes.

ORGANISATION OF OWNERS AND EMPLOYEES.

There is no registered organisation of the owners and employees in the field of transport and communication. A decade back there was a powerful but unregistered association of bus and truck owners. This association still exists but is no longer very active. It may be mentioned that the rickshaw pullers and the hackney carriage coachmen have no such organisation.

The railway employees have their unions which are affiliated to the Railway Majdoor Sabha, Katihar. The bulk of the railway employees are it is understood in a union affiliated to Hind Mazdoor Sabha.

APPENDIX I.

NORTH EAST FRONTIER RAILWAY.

Commercial statistics showing outward and inward of parcel and goods traffic and earning, 1956-57.

Name of the station.	Parcel traffic (in maunds).		Earnings.	Goods traffic (in maunds).		Earnings.
	Outward.	Inward.		Outward.	Inward.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
			Rs.			Rs.
Katihar ..	1,35,683	81,262	5,26,329	21,89,433	7,40,796	20,44,409
Purnea ..	20,696	43,941	1,04,777	4,22,763	[illegible],61,369	7,24,281
Forbesganj	5,255	76,601	1,43,137	4,19,209	2,12,851	16,55,174
Jogbani ..	2,866	11,895	636	11,81,315	3,29,413	1,65,365
Araria ..	1,820	1,218	14,101	2,99,623	1,81,006	5,66,842
Kishanganj	35,200	38,062	2,17,113	11,62,511	13,91,978	30,02,455
Thakurganj	3,571	10,041	17,174	1,79,536	76,245	2,25,926

APPENDIX I—*contd.*

Name of the station.	Parcel traffic (in maunds).		Earnings	Goods traffic (in maunds)		Earnings.
	Outward.	Inward		Outward	Inward.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
			Rs.			Rs
Katihar ..	1,67,396	82,429	6,95,546	13,86,939	8,02,313	23,77,261
Purnea ..	14,584	42,171	79,918	17,23,840	10,43,033	20,95,720
Forbesganj	4,844	64,377	12,118	12,40,850	12,93,861	14,77,608
Jogbani .	2,186	19,921	1,18,000	10,11,728	5,53,417	10,21,375
Arariya ..	3,478	1,314	39,453	2,13,768	1,73,245	3,67,358
Kishanganj	32,002	25,482	1,63,290	9,57,122	12,86,851	22,31,527
Thakurganj			Not available			

APPENDIX I—*concld*

Name of the station.	Parcel traffic (in maunds).		Earnings	Goods traffic (in maunds).		Earnings.
	Outward.	Inward.		Outward.	Inward.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
			Rs.			Rs.
Katihar .	1,60,486	1,29,639	3,60,229	8,08,878	11,14,277	12,60,571
Purnea ..	8,677	14,875	86,643	7,37,630	9,06,995	21,36,634
Forbesganj	11,619	30,401	77,725	11,39,003	15,83,078	17,16,211
Jogbani ..	5,730	1, 596	1,24,345	13,20,509	5,66,838	26,63,127
Arariya ..	621	6,110	9,317	3,73,982	5,69,184	8,10,152
Kishanganj	33,340	56,179	1,59,449	17,24,965	8,37,275	24,10,792
Thakurganj	3,221	13,553	10,148	1,86,018	1,36,630	2,71,305

APPENDIX II.

NORTH EAST FRONTIER RAILWAY.

Passenger traffic

Name of the station	1956-57. Outward	Inward.	Earnings	1957-58. Outward	Inward.	Earnings	1958-59. Outward	Inward	Earnings
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
			Rs			Rs.			Rs
Katihar ..	13,02,053	8,87,128	23,05,290	12,29,762	8,63,705	21,34,054	9,37,036	10,43,830	12,61,490
Purnea .	6,77,392	6,21,905	5,88,489	[illegible],99,541	5,56,378	6,21,504	4,69,432	5,37,859	5,37,659
Forbesganj	3,50,636	2,92,892	4,55,391	3,48,006	[illegible]	4,74,180	3,23,127	2,81,146	4,90,399
Jogbani .	1,33,164	1,17,104	94,673	2,28,970	1,57,386	7,68,472	2,18,007	27,487	8,10,461
Arariya .	84,821	723	1,20,071	91,717	403	[illegible]	69,384	56,853	62,322
Kishanganj	2,98,821	1,86,543	7,29,010	2,70,072	14,778	6,43,120	2,58,783	1,71,934	6,79,187
Thakurganj	1,14,25.	10,070	1,10,483				24,837	6,360	36,965

APPENDIX III.

OUTWARD TRAFFIC OF JUTE FROM 1956-59 (IN WAGONS).

Name of the station.	1956.	1957.	1958.	1959.
Purnea	1,356	2,815	3,727	3,958
Forbesganj	7,559	6,043	5,175	6,220
Jogbani	797	856	159	218
Katihar	1,082	1,088	971	1,021
Kishanganj	4,690	4,918	4,136	4,655

APPENDIX IV.

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY*

Name of the station.	Earnings (average monthly).	Passengers (average daily). In-ward.	Passengers (average daily). Out-ward.	Goods (average daily) (in maunds). In-ward.	Goods (average daily) (in maunds). Out-ward.	Parcels (average per annum) (in maunds). In-ward.	Parcels (average per annum) (in maunds). Out-ward.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Rs.						
1. Jankinagar ..	3,140	135	18?	11	660	2,580	2,100
2. Semapur ..	5,010	388	417	25	315	110	260
3. Kirtyanandnagar	3,380	156	141	70	115	220	315
4. Barhara Kothi ..	7,000	73	119	160	310	180	110
5. Sarsi	10,800	182	196	570	180	350	235
6. Purnea Court ..	..	190	233	1,100	750	1,210	1,900
7. Karhagola ..	21,330	391	399	690	710	350	3,800
8. Darari ..	..	193	198	12	10	240	180
9. Bhakhri ..	..		Not	open	booking.		
10. Kursela .	11,200	406	403	560	730	1,500	2,510
11. Aurahi ..	805	48	63	4	55	120	100
12. Raghubansnagar ..	1,915	36	51	30	310	125	210

*The detailed figures of outward and inward traffic are not available in the D.T.S. Office, Katihar. The average figures are given here from the file T. North Eastern Railway Transport Branch Case no. T/16/O/1.

CHAPTER IX.

ECONOMIC TRENDS.

LIVELIHOOD PATTERN.

Agriculture has been the chief means of livelihood of the district. It is only in the last two or three decades that there has been an industrialisation which is still to develop. It cannot be said that there is mixed economy in this district. An early stray reference to the livelihood pattern of the district is mentioned in an article of Mr. H. G. Cooke, District Magistrate of Purnea in 1889*. Mr. Cooke had observed that the "district is conspicuously a grazing one, affording pasturage herds of its own—much of the land devoted to pasture is probably incapable of being profitably cultivated, and it is consoling when crops fail to know that a very considerable portion of the population do not depend on agriculture, but find cattle breeding and dairy farming a profitable occupation; this goes far to account for the fact that according to the last census, nearly half of the population was non-agricultural which at first sight seems somewhat astounding in such a very rural locality". But pasturage in Cooke's time was almost a part of the agricultural economy and by itself did not absorb any appreciable percentage of the population The techniques of conducting census at that time were rather unsatisfactory and no categorical conclusion should be drawn from the fact that nearly half of the population was found to be non-agricultural.

Regarding the occupational distribution of the People Mr. Byrne in his *Survey and Settlement Operations Report* had depended on the Subsidiary Table II to Chapter XII of the †*Census Report* (1901). This table is as follows:—

Occupation.	Number.	Percentage of total population.
Agriculture and pasturage ..	1,338,307	71.4
Industry .	240,306	11·8
Commerce .	90,418	5
Professions	11,090	.6
TOTAL	1,570,311	

The Calcutta Review, no. 176, April, 1889.

†*Final Reports on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the district of Purnea* (1901—08), pp. 11-12.

He further mentioned that of the number shown above as supported by agriculture 47 per cent are actual workers and 53 per cent dependents. The actual workers also included 477,000 rent payers, 146,000 agricultural labourers and 2,000 rent receivers.

Mr. O'Malley in the Subsidiary Table III to Chapter XII of the *Census Report* (1911) has given the distribution of population according to occupations as follows*:—

Occupations	Number.	Percentage to total population	Percentage of actual workers	Dependents
Agriculture.	1,612,950	81.1	40	60
Industry	134,142	6.7	59	41
Commerce	118,282	5.9	57	43
Professions	9,892	5	57	43

The statements of the occupational distribution of the population in 1901 and 1911 respectively will show that in course of a decade the population dependent on agriculture had increased by about 10 per cent.

The next census of 1921 was taken by Mr. P. C. Tallents. The occupational statistics given in the Subsidiary Table III to Chapter XII of the †*Census Report* (1921) were as follows:—

Occupations.	Number.	Percentage to total population	Percentage of actual workers.	Dependents.
Agriculture	1,503,867	74.3	39	61
Industry	87,973	4.3	53	47
Commerce	94,181	4.7	52	48
Professions	5,592	3	56	44
Others	332,995	16.4	56	44

It is true that there are wide variations in the figures for certain occupations. For example, the figure in 1901 for industries has a very great drop in 1911 while commerce moves from 1901 figure 9,418 persons to 118,282 persons. The figure for comerce has a drop to 94,181 persons in 1921 along with a

*Census of India, 1911, vol. V, part I report (Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and Sikkim, p. 562).

†*Census of India*, 1921, Vol. VII, Part I, B. & O., p. 289.

sharp drop in figure for industries for the same census year to 89,973 souls. But this wide variation is not to be found in the figures for agriculture in the three census years 1901, 1911, and 1921. The obvious explanation is that there has been a difference in the interpretation of what population should be covered under industries, commerce and, of course, there may also have been mistakes in the census enumeration. Nevertheless, the figure for agriculture does make out that agriculture has continued to be the most important feature in the occupational pattern of the district.

The small decrease in population depending on agriculture in 1921 appears to be mainly due to the epidemic of cholera from 1915 to 1921 and also to influenza in 1918. The other occupations, *viz.*, industry, commerce and professions also recorded decrease in their population.

W. G. Lacey, the Superintendent of Census Operations, Bihar and Orissa in 1931 had not given the occupational details for the districts. In Subsidiary Table II to Chapter VIII of the *Census Report* (1931) he had given the number per mille of total population occupied under different occupations but had left the number of non-working dependents who formed substantially in every occupation particularly in agriculture. The census of 1941 was taken during the Second World War and as a war economy measure many of the tables were curtailed.

In the last census (1951) there is a section on the livelihood classes and sub-classes*. In this section the distribution of population had been shown under eight livelihood classes and further each livelihood class into the three sub-classes. Both agricultural and non-agricultural sub-classes had each four sub-classes. They were as follows:—

Total persons.	Agricultural classes (all classes).		Self-supporting.		Non-earning dependents.		Earning dependents.	
	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.
2,234,553	1,147,987	1,086,566	547,944	173,675	530,220	883,283	69,823	29,608

Since 2,525,231 was recorded as the total population of the district, the agricultural population came to about 88 per cent of the total population.

District Census Handbook, Purnea (1951).

As stated before the agricultural classes had been divided into four subdivisions. They were as follows:—

	Total.		Self-supporting persons.		Non-earning dependents.		Earning dependents.	
	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
I. Cultivation of land wholly and mainly owned and their dependents.	516,303	483,207	226,343	79,729	252,913	387,498	37,047	15,980
II. Cultivation of land wholly or mainly un-owned and their dependents.	275,652	256,100	127,264	21,606	135,442	217,083	127,946	7,411
III. Cultivating labourers and their dependents.	339,624	329,915	187,369	57,733	133,419	266,533	18,896	5,629
IV. Non-cultivating owners of land agricultural rent receivers and their dependents.	16,408	17,344	7,028	4,607	8,446	12,149	934	588

The statistics of non-agricultural classes were as follows:—

Non-agricultural class (all classes).	Total.		Self-supporting.		Non-earning dependents.		Earning dependents.	
Persons.	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	Male	Female.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
290,678	171,275	119,403	64,405	13,680	97,741	100,982	9,129	4,741

From the above statistics it is apparent that non agricultural classes only form the fringe of the district total population. About 12 per cent of the total population were enumerated as non-agriculturists in 1951 census.

The break up figures of non-agricultural classes were as follows:-

	Total.		Self-supporting persons.		Non-earning dependents.		Earning dependents.	
	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
I. Production (other than cultivation)	43,223	37,254	16,387	4,019	24,912	32,271	1,924	964
II. Commerce	45,513	35,261	20,930	5,314	22,934	28,116	1,649	1,831
III. Transport	12,047	8,897	6,213	262	4,364	8,249	1,470	386
IV. Other services and miscellaneous sources.	70,492	37,091	20,875	4,085	45,531	32,346	4,086	1,560

The discussion earlier reiterates that agriculture had continued to be the main determining factor of the economy of the district from the beginning of this century, as from before, and shall continue to be so for a very long time to come.

Industry counted 11.8 per cent of the total population in 1901, 6.7 in 1911 and 4.3 in 1921. We do not get the corresponding figures in 1931 and 1941 in census records. According to *District Census Handbook, Purnea* 1951 figures indicate that industrial population account for about 3.2 per cent of the total population.

These figures should not be taken to be quite sacrosanct as the figures for occupation for agriculture. The difficulty is that the import of the nomenclature of industries at the different census years may have differed. The variance of the figures (11.8 in 1901, 6.7 in 1911, 4.3 in 1921 and 3.2 in 1951) could be only explained if we have details as to what are the industries counted like manufacture, processing of foodstuff, rice mills or oil mills, cottage industries, etc. It is possible that what was computed in one census year was not taken into account in the next census.

For our purposes the discussion is limited to the modern sense of industry, i.e., large-scale manufactures only. This limitation would confine the discussion to jute industry concentrated at Katihar, Kishanganj and Forbesganj, match industry exclusively at Katihar and to some extent the rice and oil mills at the urban areas.

It has been observed elsewhere that Katihar had been rapidly industrialised and in 1960 it is Katihar that could exclusively claim to be an industrial town in Purnea district There had been large extension of electricity throughout Purnea district but there had been very little use of electricity for industrial purposes at any other place excepting Katihar. Purnea town had practically no industry before the introduction of electricity and has none even now. Kishanganj town has none now although there is possibility of development of some industries in Kishanganj like sawing of timber or jute mill. The recent re-distribution of the States by which a large portion of Kishanganj was made over to West Bengal had not been much of an encouragement to the industrial development to Kishanganj. With the development of Kosi Project there will be more availability of cheap electricity and it is expected that this will be an encouragement to the development of industry. It may be possible to start more rice mills and other food-processing industries or jute factories.

But as matters stand the pressure on land has gone up. There has been more of fragmentation of the holdings, particularly because of the law of inheritance. From Byrne's *Report on the Settlement Operations* (1901—1908), it appears that the total number of holdings was 604,828 and the average acreage per holding was calculated to be 4.7 acres and the average size per plot was 0.81 of an acre. The smallest plot was found in thana Bahadurganj. The average size of plots in Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga was about two-fifths of an acre; in North Monghyr it was seven-tenths and in Purnea it was as much as four-fifths of an acre. This large average size was due to the availability of uncultivated waste land.

The net cropped area in Purnea excluding Srinagar Banaili area was then 1,784,735 acres or 61 per cent of the total area; and the total cropped more than once was 515,060 acres, or 22 per cent of the total area. The area irrigated was only 1.5 per cent of the net cropped area and was practically negligible.

The *District Census Handbook, Purnea* (1951) gives the following statistics indicating the expansion of cultivation.—

Progress of cultivation during three decades.

Average net area sown in acres			
1951	1941	1931	1921
1,623,967	1,235,600	1,664,860	1,873,260

Average area sown more than once in acres				Average net area irrigated in acres			
1951.	1941	1931	1921.	1951	1941	1931	1921
575,475	90,063	320,220	25,079	25,070	26,700	26,778	26,777

If the above statistics are correct the net area sown in 1921 was higher than in 1931, 1941 and 1951. The reason for decrease in extent of cultivation against the steady increase in population seems to be peculiar. Dealing with the reliability of data relating to the progress of cultivation, the Superintendent of Census

Operations, Bihar, 1951 has mentioned: "The reporting of crop statistics is much more difficult and complex task and there are reasons for believing the deterioration in the reporting of crop statistics had started even earlier (1931). The crop statistics for the quinquennium ending 1931 and 1941 are thus very deficient and the exercise of good deal of caution is necessary in drawing any conclusions from a comparison of the figures for 1931 and 1941 with those of 1951..........the figures for the quinquennium ending with 1921 tally fairly closely with the figures contained in the *Survey and Settlement Reports* of which several were prepared about this time. The 1921 figures may, therefore, be regarded as being, on the whole, reliable."

So far as agricultural holdings are concerned we have also no current reliable data as mentioned in the *Survey and Settlement Reports* (1901–1908). A sample survey was conducted in 1952 with the help of the Department of Agricultural Statistics. Both in the *Survey and Settlement Report* (1901–1908) and in the *Sample Survey*, 1952 the term holding has been used in the legal sense as meaning "a parcel of land held under one tenancy". The figures of holdings of Purnea district were found in 1952 as follows:—

Distribution of 1,000 *agricultural holdings*

Up to 0.50 acre	Exceeding 0.50 and up to 1 acre.	Exceeding 1 and up to 2 acres.	Exceeding 2 and up to 3 acres.	Exceeding 3 and up to 4 acres	Exceeding 4 and up to 5 acres
1	2	3	4	5	6
348	161	168	110	62	32

Exceeding 5 and up to 10 acres.	Exceeding 10 and up to 15 acres	Exceeding 15 and up to 30 acres.	Exceeding 30 and less than 50 acres.	50 acres and above	Total number of holdings.
7	8	9	10	11	12
67	29	17	6		1,000

There is no doubt that there had been growing fragmentation of holdings due to partition consequent of law of inheritance. But as already has been stated the word "holding" has been used in its legal sense as denoting a parcel of land held under one tenancy. It often happens, however, that one person is registered

separately in respect of two or more holdings or tenancies. It is, therefore, more or less certain, that the figures in the table and the estimated figure of the average size of holdings exaggerate to some extent the small size of holdings, using the term holdings in its general and not legal sense meaning the net area of land held by one person We may form some idea of the actual position by correlating the population figures of owner-cultivators and agricultural rent receivers and the statistics relating to net cultivated area*. The total population of owner cultivators and agricultural rent receivers in 1951 in the district was 1,023,062 as against 1,623,967 acres of net cultivable land. The average size of a family was 4.07 (vide Subsidiary Table 6.2 of the *Bihar Census Report,* 1951), calculated on this basis, the average size of holdings, using in its economic sense, would work out to about 7.50 acres.†

As mentioned elsewhere the soil of the district is less fertile in comparison to the other districts of North Bihar. The average yield per acre of both jute and paddy, the chief main crops of the district hardly exceeds five or six maunds. The average agricultural expenditure as stated elsewhere is higher in Purnea than the other districts of North Bihar and that is why the average cultivator here has only a marginal profit left. It is gathered that there can hardly be any profit if the price of jute falls below Rs. 20 per maund. It is generally held that due to high price of jute the economic condition of the cultivators of Purnea has to some extent improved. It is only in 1958-59 that the price of jute had fallen even below Rs. 20 per maund.

The extension of cultivation depends largely on irrigational facilities. From the figures quoted above it will be seen that the irrigational facilities in the district are not encouraging. Out of the total net cropped area of 1,623,967 in 1951 only, 25,070 acres were under irrigation. It is hoped that with the completion of the Kosi canal system the cultivation of this district will considerably improve Out of about 14 lakhs acres annual irrigational capacity of the canal it is calculated about 9 lakhs acres will be irrigated in Purnea district and about 5 lakhs in Saharsa district. Bathnaha which is in the north-west of Araria subdivision, about 50 miles north-west of Purnea, is the headquarters of the Canal Circle I. The long belt of the sandy arid land which extends almost from Jogbani to Jalalgarh is expected

**Census of India*, 1951, Volume V, Bihar, Part I-Report.

†Local enquiry made by my staff confirms the figures as approximate. Mr. Byrne in the *Survey and Settlement Report* (1901—08) had calculated that the average area held by *rait* family was 10 acres. (P. C. R. O.).

to be brought under cultivation after the completion of the canal system.

Mere extension of cultivation without increasing skill in agriculture will not be much good. The traditional heritage of agricultural knowledge is still primitive largely due to economic backwardness. The Welfare State has been trying to improve their condition by more of credit facilities, availability of better seed, manures, etc., and by developing warehouse facilities and marketing conditions.

Prices and Wages.

Price level, wage structure and scope for employment are the main factors which have to be taken into account to appreciate the economic trends of a particular place. A review of the price level from the last quarter of the nineteenth century to the present time will be important to understand the material condition of the people. The early price level of the district is found in a rare document "Statistics of the Lower Provinces of Bengal (1868-69)".* The prices of the agricultural products at the end of 1868-69 were as follows:—

Commodities.	Price per maund. Rs.	as.
Rice	1	8
Wheat	2	8
Linseed	3	2
Jute	3	0
Cotton	26	8
Sugar	11	8
Salt	10	0

In the same period the price of a plough-bullock was Rs. 30 and sheep Rs. 3. Fish was sold at two annas per seer and iron per maund at Rs. 10.

About a decade later W. W. Hunter had given information regarding the prices of the district. From Hunter's account it appears that regularly fortnightly returns had been maintained, but the original office copies had been destroyed. Hunter mentions that in 1794 in connection with Government purchase the Collector had reported *inter-alia* that† "the *bhadai* rice, when cleaned, sells at 2 *mans* 10 *seers* per rupee (or 1 s. 2¾ d. per cwt.); unshelled *bhadai dhan* or rice, at 4½ *mans* per rupee (or 7½ d.

**Statistics of Lower Provinces of Bengal for 1868-69*, published in 1872 (Board's Return no. 41 B.).

†*Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol. XV, 1877, pp. 312-313.

per cwt.) ; *aghani* rice cleaned at 2 *mans* per rupee (or 1 s. 4¾ d. per cwt.) ; unshelled *aghani* rice 4 *mans* per rupee (or 7½ d. per cwt.) ; *Aruah,* or fine rice, one rupee per *man* (or 2 s. 9½ d. per cwt.)". He adds: "Wheat is another commodity, the produce of the district, that is greatly sought after by all classes of people, and is very cheap and moderate. If the Governor-General in Council thinks proper to direct 25,000 *mans* (or 893 tons) of it can be purchased without the smallest risk or difficulty. The price is generally from 2 to 2 *mans* 10 *seers* per rupee (or 1 s. 4¾ d. to 1 s. 2¾ d. per cwt.).

"The Subdivisional Officer of Arariya, in 1873, reported that within his jurisdiction prices of foodgrains, and all kinds of agricultural produce, have fallen considerably since 1866, the year of the great famine in Orissa. The average of the rates for the whole district shows that during that year the best cleaned rice was selling at 11 s. 2½ d. a cwt., or Rs. 4 a *man* of 82 lbs.; coarse rice, at 9 s. 6 d. a cwt., or Rs. 3½ a *man*; fine unhusked rice at 6 s. 10 d. a cwt., or Rs. 2¼ a *man,* coarse unhusked rice, at 6 s. 7¼ d. a cwt., or Rs. 2 a *man;* barley, 6 s. 10 d. a cwt., or Rs. 2½ a *man;* unhusked barley, at 5 s. 7¼ d. a cwt., or Rs. 2 *man;* Indian corn grain, at 5 s. 7½ d. a cwt., or Rs. 2 a *man;* Indian corn in the ear, at 2 s. 9½ d. a cwt., or Re. 1 a *man*; wheat, at 11 s. 2½ d. a cwt, or Rs. 4 a *man*; sugarcane at 9 s. 6 d. a cwt., or Rs. 3½ a *man*. . . . In the last week of December, 1875, after the *aghani* or main harvest of the year had been gathered, the prices of the foodgrain in the city of Purniah, and the large mart of Kasba, were at following rates:—Purniah city, best rice 5 s. 7½ d. per cwt., or 20 *sers* per rupee; common rice, 4 s. 10¾ d. per cwt, or 23 *sers* per rupee, wheat, 4 s. 8 d. per cwt., or 24 *sers* per rupee. Kasba, best rice, 5 s. 7⅛ d. per cwt., or 20 *sers* per rupee; common rice, 5 s 4 d. per cwt., or 21 *sers* per rupee; wheat 5 s. 7⅛ d. per cwt., or 20 *sers* per rupee."

From the account given in the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911) it appears that the prices of the agricultural produce showed upward tendency. The rise in the price of the principal foodgrains and salt per rupee can be had from the statistics given below:—

Year	Common rice		Wheat.		Gram.		Maize		Salt.	
	Srs	Chs.	Srs	Chs	Srs	Ch	Srs	Chs	Srs	Chs.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1905-06 ..	10	14	12	7	13	12	20	15	12	14
1906-07 ..	7	6	10	1	10	7	11	4	13	9
1907-08 .	8	0	8	10	9	12	10	8	15	2

Regarding the rise of prices the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911) had mentioned that "The general rise of prices in recent years is not peculiar to Purnea, but has been general throughout the province and is due to other than local circumstances. There is, it will be noticed, one exception, viz., the fall in the price of salt, which is attributed to the reduction of the duty on that commodity."

The price level of most of the essential commodities in common with the other districts of the province had shot up with the declaration of the First World War in 1914 and had a steady rise till the close of the War in 1918. It is reported that the price of the foodgrains remained at high level till 1929. During this period prices showed slight variation in particular years. Rice was sold on the average five to six seers per rupee, wheat six to six and half seers and gram and maize seven to eight seers per rupee. The world-wide slump which ensued from the closing month of 1929 brought in a sharp fall in price of foodgrains. The agriculturists were hard hit though it was a boon period for the service holders or people with more or less fixed income The downward trend of prices continued more or less till 1938 The price level again soared high with the declaration of the Second World War in September, 1939. The expectation of prolongation of war made the speculators hoard the stock in anticipation of sharper rise in price of the foodgrains and other commodities. Under such circumstance commodities became scarce in open market and the prices began to soar high. Prompt executive action by the Government brought the situation under control to some extent and prices were stabilized, though at a higher level than those before the War. In the beginning of 1940, the price control measures which had been put into operation on the outbreak of the War were sought to be vigorously enforced. Fair price shops to sell the essential commodities at control prices were started to check abnormal rise in prices of the essential commodities. Throughout the whole period of War Government restricted the free movement of commodities and imposed control over essential commodities for life. But in spite of all this, it cannot be said that there was no black-marketing or commodities going under-ground. Purnea being considered a surplus district for rice had to feel the brunt of excessive export which resulted in higher prices at Purnea. Cloth was also in short supply throughout the war years.

It was expected that with the end of the War the general food situation would ease, but the expectation did not materialise.

The retail price index number of Sonaili market given below will indicate the position which may be taken to be generally applicable to the other markets of the district.

BASE: JANUARY TO DECEMBER, 1944-100*.

Year and month.	Cereals.	Pulses.	Other articles of food.	All articles of food.	Fuel and lighting.	Miscellaneous.	Clothing.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1946	154	121	127	131	89	145	142
1947	190	150	154	159	108	176	123
1948	175	145	173	169	205	271	166
1949 .. .	224	134	218	206	130	223	126
1950	227	172	258	239	113	304	143
1951 .. .	281	182	254	247	120	311	259
1952 ..	260	163	202	205	125	196	235
1953 ..	202	165	190	188	125	305	199
January, 1953	179	167	188	183	125	278	199
February .. .	181	167	183	180	125	306	199
March ..	181	167	177	176	125	310	199
April .. .	183	167	175	175	125	310	199
May	224	167	189	101	125	310	199
June	218	160	199	196	125	310	199
July	250	160	215	213	125	310	199

The *District Census Handbook, Purnea* (1951) also mentions the ruling wholesale prices of a decade, i.e., from 1941 to 1950. The perusal of the statistics will show that after the close of the Second World War the prices of foodgrains had

***Bihar Statistical Handbook*, 1955, Table 223, published by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Government of Bihar.

increased considerably. The statistics below from the same source will show the prices of foodgrains in the years 1941 to 1950:—

Ruling wholesale prices during the decade.

Year.	Month.	Price (per maund). Rice (medium).	Wheat (red).	Gram.
		Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
1941 ..	January	5 0 0	..	4 0 0
	February	4 14 0	..	3 12 0
	March	4 12 0	..	3 12 0
	April	4 14 0	..	3 12 0
	May	4 14 0	.	3 6 0
	June	5 4 0	..	3 8 0
	July	5 4 0	..	4 0 0
	August	5 15 0	..	4 0 0
	September	5 15 0	..	3 8 0
	October	6 9 0	..	3 8 0
	November	6 9 0	.	3 8 0
	December	5 4 0	..	4 4 0
1942 ..	January	5 4 0	..	4 4 0
	February	5 4 0	..	4 4 0
	March	5 8 0	..	4 4 0
	April	5 8 0	.	4 4 0
	May .. .	5 8 0	..	4 4 0
	June	6 0 0	..	4 12 0
	July	6 4 0		4 12 0
	August	6 4 0	..	5 0 0
	September	6 8 0	..	5 0 0
	October	6 8 0	..	5 0 0
	November	6 8 0	..	5 0 0
	December	6 8 0	..	6 0 0
1943 ..	January	6 8 0	..	6 0 0
	February	7 8 0	..	6 0 0
	March	7 8 0	..	6 0 0

Year.	Month.	Price (per maund).		
		Rice (medium).	Wheat (red).	Gram.
		Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
	April	9 14 0	..	9 10 0
	May	9 14 0	..	9 10 0
	June	13 0 0	..	14 0 0
	July	25 0 0	..	15 0 0
	August	21 0 0	..	15 0 0
	September	22 0 0	..	13 0 0
	October	19 0 0	16 0 0	13 0 0
	November	18 0 0	13 8 0	13 0 0
	December	14 0 0	11 8 0	11 8 0
1944 ..	January	12 0 0	11 8 0	9 0 0
	February	12 0 0	12 8 0	9 0 0
	March	12 0 0	12 8 0	9 0 0
	April	12 0 0	12 8 0	9 0 0
	May . ..	[illegible] 0 0	11 0 0	9 0 0
	June	12 0 0	11 0 0	9 0 0
	July . ..	11 8 0	9 0 0	10 0 0
	August . ..	12 0 0	9 8 0	9 0 0
	September . ..	12 8 0	9 8 0	9 0 0
	October	12 8 0	10 0 0	9 0 0
	November	12 8 0	9 8 0	9 0 0
	December . ..	10 8 0	7 8 0	8 0 0
1945 ..	January . ..	11 0 0	7 0 0	8 0 0
	February	10 8 0	7 4 0	8 0 0
	March . ..	11 8 0	8 0 0	11 0 0
	April . ..	10 8 0	8 4 0	7 8 0
	May	10 14 0	8 6 0	8 0 0
	June	11 8 0	8 8 0	8 2 0
	July	12 8 0	8 12 0	8 0 0

Year.	Month.	Price (per maund).								
		Rice (medium).			Wheat (red).			Gram.		
		Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a	p	Rs	a.	p.
1945—*concld.*	August	13	14	0	9	0	0	8	12	0
	September	14	8	0	10	0	0	8	12	0
	October ..	14	8	0	10	0	0	8	12	0
	November ..	13	8	0	11	8	0	10	0	0
	December ..	12	0	0	12	0	0	10	0	0
1946 .	January .	12	12	0	12	8	0	10	0	0
	February ..	16	8	0	12	8	0	10	0	0
	March ..	15	0	0	12	0	0	10	0	0
	April ..	15	8	0	16	0	0	11	0	0
	May ..	15	8	0	18	0	0	14	0	0
	June ..	15	8	0	16	0	0	13	0	0
	July .	20	0	0	15	0	0	13	0	0
	August ..	20	0	0	15	0	0	18	0	0
	September .	21	0	0	16	0	0	20	0	0
	October ..	25	0	0	16	0	0	20	0	0
	November . ..	23	0	0	16	0	0	20	0	0
	December	23	0	0	..			..		
1947 .	January	15	8	0	19	0	0	20	0	0
	February	15	8	0	19	0	0	17	0	0
	March	19	0	0	17	0	0	17	0	0
	April	20	0	0	17	8	0	13	0	0
	May	19	12	0	18	8	0	16	0	0
	June	19	8	0	19	8	0	18	0	0
	July	22	0	0	19	0	0	18	0	0
	August	22	8	0	23	0	0	17	0	0
	September	24	0	0	26	0	0	17	0	0
	October	24	8	0	29	0	0	17	0	0
	November	21	0	0	24	0	0	22	0	0
	December	21	0	0	26	0	0	19	0	0

Year.	Month.	Price (per maund).								
		Rice (medium)			Wheat (red).			Gram		
		Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.
1948 ..	January .. .	17	0	0	26	0	0	19	0	0
	February	17	0	0	30	0	0	19	0	0
	March	17	0	0	30	0	0	15	0	0
	April .	17	0	0	26	0	0	15	0	0
	May	18	0	0	20	0	0	15	0	0
	June	20	0	0	20	0	0	15	0	0
	July .	22	0	0	22	0	0	14	0	0
	August .	22	8	0	25	0	0	14	0	0
	September ..	23	0	0	26	0	0	14	0	0
	October	22	0	0	24	0	0	17	0	0
	November . ..	20	0	0	24	0	0	17	0	0
	December . ..	21	0	0	24	0	0	15	0	0
1949 .	January . .	22	0	0	24	0	0	15	0	0
	February ..	23	8	0	23	0	0	15	0	0
	March	23	12	0	26	0	0	14	0	0
	April . .	24	8	0	22	8	0	16	8	0
	May .	24	8	0	23	12	0	14	8	0
	June	26	0	0	23	8	0	14	8	0
	July . .	26	0	0	20	0	0	14	8	0
	August .	29	0	0	19	0	0	14	0	0
	September ..	35	1[illegible]	0	22	0	0	15	0	0
	October .. .	32	0	0	20	8	0	16	0	0
	November .. .	26	8	0	24	0	0	16	0	0
	December	22	0	0	23	8	0	16	0	0
1950 ..	January .. .	23	8	0	24	0	0	18	0	0
	February .. .	24	0	0	24	0	0	18	0	0
	March	25	8	0	28	0	0	20	0	0

Year.	Month.	Price (per maund).								
		Rice (medium).			Wheat (red)			Gram.		
		Rs	a.	p	Rs.	a	p	Rs.	a.	p.
1950—concld	April	26	0	0	23	0	0	15	0	0
	May	26	8	0	23	0	0	18	0	0
	June	30	0	0	24	0	0	18	0	0
	July	30	0	0	27	0	0	25	0	0
	August	32	0	0	27	8	0	25	0	0
	September	33	0	0	26	0	0	24	0	0
	October	32	8	0	26	0	0	23	0	0
	November	30	0	0	26	0	0	23	0	0
	December	27	8	0	26	0	0	23	0	0

The perusal of the statistics will show that the price of foodgrains from January, 1941 to June, 1943 was somewhat stabilized due to stringent measures taken by the Government but from July, 1943 the price of rice showed an abrupt rise from Rs. 13 per maund in June to Rs. 25 per maund in July. In December, during harvest season the price again came down to Rs. 14 per maund. In 1944-45 the price of rice fluctuated between Rs. 12 and Rs. 14 per maund, but from July, 1946 it again shot up to Rs. 20 per maund and showed a gradual increase and even in the harvest month of December it was sold at Rs. 23 per maund. There was a remarkable rise of price in other foodgrains also. In September, 1949 the average price of rice was Rs. 35.15, wheat Rs. 22 and gram Rs. 15 per maund. The price level remained high throughout 1950 and particularly from July, 1950.

The District Supply Office at Purnea had supplied us with table showing wholesale and retail prices of foodgrains from 1951 to 1959. The table shows wide fluctuation of the price level for certain years and there are reasons too for the fluctuations. The highest price for coarse rice per maund was Rs. 39 in 1951 and the next highest price was Rs. 33 per maund in 1958. These two years saw a complete failure of *Hathia* and scarcity conditions prevailed. In the last decade the best years for low prices for rice seem to be 1954 and 1955. The table obtained is as follows:—

STATEMENT SHOWING WHOLSALE MARKET RATES OF AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES IN THE DISTRICT OF PURNEA FOR THE PERIOD FROM 1951 TO 1959 (*per maund*).

Year.	Paddy Coarse.		Rice Coarse.		Wheat white.		Wheat red.		Maize.	
	Minimum.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Maximum.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
1951 ..	14 8 0	21 0 0	28 0 0	39 0 0	24 0 0	32 0 0	25 0 0	35 0 0	16 8 0	21 0 0
1952 ..	9 0 0	20 0 0	19 0 0	32 0 0	22 0 0	32 0 0	16 0 0	28 0 0	10 8 0	18 0 0
1953 ..	8 9 0	16 8 0	17 0 0	27 0 0	17 0 0	28 0 0	15 0 0	25 0 0	10 0 0	15 0 0
1954 ..	7 0 0	12 4 0	15 0 0	[illegible] 0 0	15 0 0	23 0 0	10 0 0	18 0 0	7 8 0	9 0 0
1955 ..	8 0 0	10 8 0	14 0 [illegible]	19 12 0	11 0 0	22 0 0	8 4 0	16 0 0	8 0 0	11 0 0
1956 ..	7 8 0	15 0 0	16 8 [illegible]	25 4 0	14 0 0	22 0 0	10 8 0	20 0 0	9 0 0	16 8 0
1957 ..	6 0 0	17 0 0	17 0 0	26 0 0	17 0 0	23 0 0	15 0 0	19 0 0	12 8 0	17 0 0
1958 ..	9 0 0	21 0 0	18 0 0	33 0 0	15 8 0	26 0 0	10 8 0	15 0 0	13 4 0	18 0 0
1959 ..	8 0 0	16 0 0	16 0 0	25 0 0	17 0 0	26 0 0	11 0 0	18 0 0	7 0 0	16 0 0
				Retail rates per seer.						
1951 ..	0 6 3	0 9 0	0 12 0	1 0 0	0 10 0	0 13 0	0 10 6	0 14 6	0 7 0	0 9 0
1952 ..	0 4 0	0 8 6	0 8 0	0 13 6	0 9 6	0 13 6	0 6 9	0 11 6	0 4 5	0 8 0
1953 ..	0 4 0	0 7 0	0 7 3	0 11 6	0 7 6	0 11 6	0 6 6	0 10 6	0 4 6	0 6 6
1954 ..	0 3 3	0 5 6	0 6 6	0 8 0	0 6 6	0 9 6	0 4 6	0 7 9	0 3 6	0 4 0
1955 ..	0 3 6	0 4 6	0 6 0	0 8 3	0 5 0	0 9 6	0 3 6	0 6 9	0 3 6	0 5 0
1956 ..	0 3 6	0 6 6	0 7 7	0 10 8	0 6 0	0 9 6	0 4 6	0 8 6	0 4 0	0 7 7
1957 ..	0 4 0	0 7 3	0 7 3	0 11 0	0 7 3	0 9 6	0 6 6	0 8 0	0 5 6	0 7 3
1958 ..	0 4 0	0 8 6	0 7 3	0 13 6	0 6 6	0 11 0	0 4 6	0 6 6	0 6 0	0 7 3
1959 ..	0 3 6	0 6 9	0 6 6	0 10 6	0 7 3	0 11 0	0 5 0	0 7 3	0 3 0	0 6 9

The livelihood pattern of this district largely depends on the price of jute which is the main cash crop of the district. The price of jute remained high throughout the war period which gave great impetus to the jute growers. After the war also for some years the price of jute remained high. The following statement has been supplied by the Director of Economic Research, Calcutta:—

AVERAGE PRICES FOR BOTTOM GRADE WHITE JUTE AT GULABBAG (PURNEA).

(Rs. per standard maund).

Month.	1950-51.	1951-52.	1952-53.	1953-54.	1954-55.	1955-56.	1956-57.	1958-59	1959-6
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
July ..	36.19	64.44	19.31	19.62	18.00	25.12	25.06	N A.	17.50
August ..	37.88	56.50	23.44	24.38	20.81	25.19	25.56	N A.	19 40
September	35.44	45.81	26.31	20.88	23.75	21.25	25 19	19 67	19.27
October ..	34.19	48.25	23.25	19.19	23.00	19.56	24 37	18 28	19 19
November ..	35.31	46.94	17.38	22.88	24.44	23.00	25 44	16 85	19.52
December ..	34.94	47.62	17.88	24 31	25.88	22.75	26 37	15.74	25.82
January ..	34.38	50.37	17.94	25.25	29.44	23.50	27 19	15 85	27 11
February ..	35.69	36.19	17.25	22.69	34.44	25 37	24.75	16.40	25.45
March ..	54.06	24.75	14.12	23.00	31.50	24.62	24.81	16.37	27 87
April ..	N.T.	28.75	13.19	24.69	29.25	23 50	24.06	15.87	30 80
May ..	N.T.	20.88	20.81	23.38	27.06	22.94	N.T.	15.61	40 97
June ..	N.T.	19.81	21.19	20.75	23.06	23.06	N.T.	16.63	36 98
Average ..	37.50	40.86	19.34	22.58	25.88	23.32	25.28	16.73	25.83

Note.- Data for 1957-58 are not available.

N. T.- No transaction.

N. A. - Not available.

Price Control Measures.

High prices and scarcity of essential commodities have been the common trends since the closing years of the Second Great War. In 1950 the situation became all the more alarming due to failure of Hathia rains and Government had to intervene to save the situation. The Bihar Agricultural Levy Order, 1950 had to be proclaimed and a total quantity of 9,399 maunds of

paddy was collected from the large producers and 51,480 maunds of rice was also collected from rice mills through levy on huller basis and from the licensed dealers. In 1952-53, 9,860 maunds of paddy was procured through direct purchase as against 2,91,000 maunds in 1953-54. The procured stock of paddy got milled in Katihar and Garhbanaili rice and oil mills and a major portion of the rice was supplied to the District Magistrates of North Bihar. Thereafter the situation somewhat improved and the Government lifted the levy orders. Again in 1959 drought condition prevailed owing to failure of *Hathia* rains The Government this time introduced the Bihar Miller Rice Procurement (Levy) Order according to which mill owners and dealers were required to deliver 25 to 50 per cent of their production to Government at the rate of Rs. 16 per maund for standard medium rice. In 1959 in this way 1,19,024 maunds of milled rice was procured from the dealers and owners of mills and 175 maunds of paddy was procured through voluntary production scheme at the rate of Rs. 9 per maund.

Besides procurement the Government also took measures to regulate the distribution of foodgrains through fair price shops on the basis of printed ration cards. In 1951 there were 26 Government godowns, 34 licensed wholesalers of foodgrains and 653 fair price shops functioning in the district to distribute foodgrains to consumers at fixed rates. The off-takes which were distributed through the fair price shops were rice, wheat, milo, jawar and dates. It is reported that the scarcity of 1950-51 changed the food habit of the district. The people of Purnea were not accustomed to take wheat but scarcity made them take to wheat. With the fair harvest of *aghani* crops in 1951, the intensity of scarcity began to decline and in 1952 the fair price shops had dwindled.

The scarcity of 1957-58 was not less severe than 1950-51. In 1956 the number of godowns were only seven which was raised to 18 in 1957 and 32 in 1958. In the scarcity of 1957-58 the Government supplied 23,26,901 maunds of foodgrains through 1,390 fair price shops in 1958. The intensity of scarcity dwindled with the harvest of kharif crops in 1958. In the urban areas wheat is still distributed through fair price shops. It may be mentioned here that it has never been possible nor necessary to cover the rural areas at times of scarcity.

Besides foodgrains the Government took price control measures over essential articles such as cloth, yarn, cement, kerosene oil, coal, sugar and iron materials. Throughout the war period Government imposed control over these essential

articles but after war the control on some of them was lifted. Again in 1948 Government re-introduced control over the above mentioned articles.

Cloth and yarn.—With a view to meet the scarcity of cloth the Government of Bihar promulgated the Bihar Cotton Cloth and Yarn Control in November, 1948. This required the whole-sale dealers, retailers and hawkers to take license and sell the commodities at controlled rates. Cloth and yarn had to be imported through Provincial nominees. In 1950, there were five cloth importers and three yarn importers, besides 3,574 licensees, in the district. About 500 to 600 lakh bales of cloth and 30 to 40 bales of yarn per month were allotted to Purnea which were quite inadequate for a population of over twenty five lakhs. This caused acute shortage of cloth, and continued till 1951 when distribution of cloth on the basis of ration cards was introduced. By the middle of 1952 the supply position improved and gradual decontrol was exercised. In 1953 the control on cloth and yarn through Provincial nominees was also dispensed with. Since then the cloth and yarn merchants are required to take licenses for dealing in cloth and yarn Subsequently, the supply of cloth position improved due to decontrol and availability of handloom and *khadi* cloth

In 1959-60 the price level of cloth assumed a rising tendency and measures have been taken in 1960 for getting prices printed over mill-made cloth in order to check high prices.

Cement.—Bihar Cement Control Order, 1948, was introduced in December, 1948, which required dealers to obtain lincenses and dispose of the stock at controlled rates to permit-holders. Foreign cement, however, was sold without permit but the price had to be fixed by the District Magistrate. In 1952 there were 16 stockists of Indian cement and 77 licensees for foreign cement in the district and the supply position was reported to be satisfactory. But in 1953 there was again shortage of cement which continued till 1957. During this period the district got allotment of 34 to 38 wagons (B. G.) of cement per quarter. In 1958 the supply position improved and control over distribution of cement was relaxed and the stockists were allowed to sell up to 20 bags per consumer per day. In 1959 there was further improvement in cement supply and consequently the control over distribution of cement was withdrawn. There were 56 licensees of Indian cement in the district in 1959. In 1960 due to paucity of wagons there had been deterioration in cement supply.

Kerosene Oil.—The Bihar Kerosene Oil Control Order was promulgated in October, 1948 to regulate the supply and distribution of kerosene oil. In 1950 there were 16 wholesale agents and 978 retailers in Purnea district The monthly quota of the district was 40,350 gallons. Till 1951 the supply was scarce and there was full control on it. In 1952 due to foreign supply the position somewhat improved and in 1953 the control on kerosene oil was withdrawn and since then supply position is reported to be satisfactory.

Coal.—The Bihar Coal Control Order was introduced in October, 1947. Four classes of coal was allotted in the district, in 1950 the district got quarterly allotment of 50 B. G. wagons for oil industries, 83 for food industries, 73 for fuel coke and 265 wagons for brick burning. On account of shortage of wagons the supply, particularly of brick burning coal could not be regularised. In order to remove difficulties three dumps were opened at Purnea, Araria and Kishanganj for brick burning coal and later in 1955 and 1956 dumps were opened at Katihar and Forbésganj respectively. In 1960 the district was getting supply of 574 wagons of Z. B. R. (fuel coke) coal, but position of fuel coal is not satisfactory in the district.

Sugar.—The Bihar Sugar Control Order was introduced in February, 1950. In 1950 there were 19 wholesale dealers and the monthly quota was 7,500 maunds which increased to 9,000 maunds in 1951. In 1953 the control over sugar was suspended and there was no control till April, 1959. The Bihar Sugar Dealers Licensing Order was introduced in May, 1959, and accordingly, the licensed dealers got allotment of sugar on their indents direct from the Chief Director of Sugar and Vanaspati, New Delhi. The district gets allotment of 59 wagons (M. G.) monthly and *ad hoc* allotment is also made for important festivals.

Iron and Steel.—The Iron and Steel Control Order, 1941, issued by the Central Government was in force in 1950 to regulate the supply of iron materials. In 1950, there was only one stockist at Katihar and the supply was quite inadequate. Though in 1952 another stockist at Purnea city was appointed still the situation could not improve owing to inadequate supply of iron and steel. From 1954 to 1957 the supply of iron materials was arranged through bulk permits in favour of the District Magistrate and in 1958 the supply was received through the stockists. The third stockist was also appointed at Purnea but the position of the supply of iron materials is reported to be scanty and irregular.

STATEMENT SHOWING PROCUREMENT, NUMBER OF GOVERNMENT FOODGRAINS GRAINS, ETC IN THE DISTRICT OF PURNEA DURING THE PERIOD FROM 1950 TO

Procurement.		Year.	No of godowns function-ing	No of whole-salers function-ing.	No. of fair shops function ing	Off-take.	
Paddy	Rice					Wheat.	Rice
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. 6,945 (levy)	51,444 Huller	1950	7		139	1,12,121	5,363
2 2,454 (levy)	36 Huller and traders.	1951	21	34	653	3,34,029	22,489
3. 90,960 .	..	1952	26	34	130	1,30,175	10,353
4. 2,91,000 ..	Direct purchase	1953	32	..	48	66 630	14,677
5	.	1954	6	.	33	20,900	28,590
6. ..	..	1955	6	..	33	22,310	26,911
7 ..	..	1956	7	..	33	12,200	40,015
8. ..	..	1957	18	..	620	4,57,120	15,288
9. ..	..	1958	32	..	1,390	16,37,245	92,847
10. 175 Voluntary procurement.	1,19,024 Levy from millers and traders.	1959	18	..	445	1,52,333	36,798
11. ..	..	1960 upto date	23	.	567	3,52,899	54,250
3,99,534 ..	1,70,504	TOTAL				33,77,980	3,47,583

GODOWNS, WHOLSALERS, FAIR PRICE SHOPS AND OFFTAKE OF DIFFERENT FOOD-
1960 (UPTO OCTOBER.)

(*Figures in maunds.*)

Off take - *concld.*

Jawar.	Milo.	Maize.	Dates.	Atta.	Kalai-seeds.	Wheat-seeds.	Gram.	Total.
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
..	..	..	..	50,697	4,945	..	..	1,73,096
13,419	1,78,003	..	11,309	983	.	..	..	7,60,232
1,021	20,487	..	2,084	..	..	..	..	1,64,122
..	1,615	..	..		..	..	..	82,922
..	246	.	..	.	..	..	187	49,923
.	.	.	..	..	..	526	780	50,527
.	.	.	.	..	..	..	..	52,224
..	..	..	..	..	..	5,001	4,033	4,81,451
	2,276	330	..	..	..	53,684	6,784	17,93,166
	12,4[illegible]	1,748	.	..	..	238	..	2,03,609
	1,952					569		3,89,670
14,440	2,17,071	2,078	13,393	51,680	4,945	60,018	11,784	40,00,942

Wages.

So far as wages, the earliest authentic information in the present times is in Hunter's Account*. He had mentioned that in 1788 the average earnings of the labouring classes were at one rupee or two shillings a month. Dr. Buchanan Hamilton in 1810 had mentioned that the lowest class of farm labourers received eight annas or one shilling a month, and four ozs. of cleaned rice a day. Such a labourer, however, was paid specially during the harvest time at the rate of 5¼ seers of unhusked rice, or 12 maunds for three months: or for the whole year, 9s. in money and 14 maunds of unhusked or 9 maunds of husked rice, which could give him 2 lbs. a day for food. The rate of the cowherds was much the same. They received two annas a month in money, and ⅛ seer of rice daily for every six head of cattle tended It was considered a full day's work for a man to tend 24 oxen, so that his monthly wages were eight annas or 1s. and ½ seer or 1 lb of rice daily. Ploughmen were usually remunerated by being permitted to use the farmers' plough and cattle on their little plots of land during eight days in the month The daily workers were best off, their ordinary wages were three *pan* of *kauris* or nine pies (1⅛ d.) a day in money, or three seers (six pounds) weight of unhusked rice. The female coolies were almost as well paid but they, as well as the men were very improvident A strange rate of payment was given to Musalman cooks They received eight annas or one shilling for every maund of 82 lbs. weight of rice boiled by them. This system of payment had completely died out in the 19th century.

Regarding the wages prevalent in his time, Hunter has observed as follows:—

> "At the present day, coolies, other than agricultural labourers, are not to be had in the District A few Dhangars come from the Santal Parganas, but usually demand as much as 8s. a month. Agricultural labourers are paid 7s. a month. About 1842 they received 3s. to 4s. a month so that there has been a steady advance in the value of unskilled labour, the rate having increased, roughly speaking, about one hundred per cent in a quarter of a century. Skilled labour, when employed by natives, is still generally paid in kind. Blacksmiths who know their work tolerably well go to the workshops of the East Indian Railways to seek employment, and it is very difficult to find in the District a man who

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*Hunter's *Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol. XV, pp. 311-12.

can do more than make a ploughshare; such a man requires from 18s. to £1, 4s. 0d. a month. Carpenters can be more readily got for 12s. to 14s. a month, the employment afforded by the indigo factories having induced them to stay in the country. They also do a good business in making carts and other conveyances. Brick layers receive about 8s. to 10s. a month. All these artisans are usually paid in kind when employed by their fellow villagers. Their wages also have risen of late, as ten years ago carpenters could be had for 8s. and brick layers for 6s. per mensem The Subdivisional Officer of Arariya, in 1873, reported that within his jurisdiction labour was abundant and cheap. Working in the fields or thatching houses, or doing any ordinary work for six hours, entitles a labourer to 3 seers of unhusked rice and one of his meals, equivalent in money value to 4 pice or 1½d. Those who work for twelve hours in the day get twice as much. The village blacksmith receives yearly two *mans* of unhusked rice for each plough kept in working order, the materials for repair being provided by the owner For making a well, potters or *kumbhars* (two of whom sink and fit in the ring to a depth of 15 or 18 feet in two days) charge 6s. or 8s These wells do not last beyond two or three years, as the rings apparently are not made of good clay, and perhaps are not sufficiently burnt The village barber is also paid in unhusked rice, of which he receives 5 seers from each person. The washerman, where he exists, takes either cash payments, or on an average 5 *mans* (or about 3¾ cwts) of unhusked rice a year from each household Work done by contract, such as excavating for road embankments, tanks, etc., is paid for at from 2s. to 4s per 1,000 cubic feet. Brick-making is especially cheap, as Nepalis from across the frontier engage to mould and burn them whenever required, the wood being supplied and badly-burned bricks discarded, at 4s. per thousand. Land agency servants are liberally remunerated, *patwaris*, or rent collectors, receiving 1 anna for every rupee of the villagers' rent, besides what they extort. *Mukaddams*, or head-men, who receive the money from the *patwaris* to make over

to the *zamindar*, are in *pargana* Sultanpur paid a fixed salary of from 8s to 12s a month. Messengers, or *piyadas*, are also paid by the *zamindar*, perhaps 4s. a month. The *gorait*, or office watchman, the only hereditary servant in the management, generally holds a few *bighas* of rent-free land. The *siman* in *pargana* Sripur is identical with the Sultanpur *mukaddam*, but receives no regular pay".

The statistics of the Lower Provinces of Bengal, for 1868-69 referred to earlier also corroborates Hunter It is mentioned that in Purnea in 1868-69 the skilled labourers used to get four annas to eight annas and unskilled labourers two annas per diem, carts and boats were hired at annas eight and rupee one per day.

The rate of wages had subsequently gone up and this will be apparent from the following table of the daily wages paid to various classes of labour from 1895 to 1909* —

—	1895	1900	1905	1909
	Rs a. p	Rs a p	Rs a p	Rs a. p
Masons	0 5 0 to 1 0 0	0 5 3 to 1 0 0	0 8 0 to 0 8 0	0 8 0 to 1 0 0
Carpenters	0 6 0 to 1 0 0	0 4 0 to 1 0 0	0 8 0 to 0 12 0	0 6 0 to 0 12 0
Blacksmiths	0 4 0 to 0 8 0	0 4 0 to 0 8 0	0 6 0 to 0 8 0	0 14 0 to 1 0 0
Male coolies	0 2 6 to 0 3 0	0 2 0 to 0 3 0	0 3 0 to 0 4 0	0 3 6 to 0 4 0
Female coolies	0 1 6 to 0 2 0	0 1 6 to 0 2 6	0 2 0 to 0 2 6	0 2 6 to 0 3 0

**District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911), pp. 109-110.

Further regarding the agricultural labourers Mr. O'Malley had mentioned as follows:—

"It must be remembered that in this district wages are still very largely paid in kind The village carpenter receives 15 to 20 seers of grain for each plough at harvest time, and in consideration of this allowance, he keeps agricultural implements in repair. The barber and washerman draw 5 to 10 seers of grain annually for each family they serve, according to its size; while the cobbler has a presumptive right to the skins of animals which die within the village confines. Agricultural labourers are also generally paid in kind. Every reaper is expected to cut in a day two bundles *(bojha)* and six *mutis* of rice; each bundle consists of 20 *mutis,* i.e., literally handfuls, but the *muti* is a conventional measure, considerably exceeding what can be held in the closed hand; in fact the measure varies according to local usage. In some parts too there is a measure called a *panja,* intermediate between the *muti* and *bojha,* and the scale is: 5 *mutis* make a *panja* and 6 *panjas* form a *bojha,* so that a *bojha* is equal to 30 *mutis*. Of the 46 *mutis* received from the reaper, the farmer keeps forty-two and gives his labourer four; these *mutis* contain about 2½ seers of rough rice. The rate for threshing, when performed by men, is one seer out of eight seers threshed.

"After the rice has been threshed, it is cleaned by women, who are also paid in kind. The owner gives 70 seers of rice in the husk, and receives back 40 seers of clean grain, when the operation is performed without previous boiling. Under the *ushna* system the women get 65 seers of rough rice and return 40 seers of clean rice. It takes two women two days to produce 40 seers of clean rice, according to either method; and they are remunerated, in the case of *ushna,* with 4¾ seers of clean rice and a half seer of broken rice, or *khud chaul;* in the case of *arwa*, with 5 seers of clean rice and 1¼ seers of broken rice. Each woman, therefore, earns 1¼ seers of *ushna,* or 1⅝ seers of *arwa* rice, daily. In the rice market at Kasba, near Purnea, the grain dealers get 36¼ seers of clean rice out of every 70 seers of

rough rice, after paying 3¾ seers of clean rice to the women for their labour. In the case of *arwa* rice the dealers get 50 seers net of clean rice from 2 maunds of rough rice, and the women receive 5 seers of the former for their labour.

"One class of labourers calls for special mention, viz., the *kamiyas,* who do not receive a daily wage, but are, by custom, bound to serve their employer on nominal wages, e.g., of Rs. 6 per annum. These men are well fed and suffer but little in times of scarcity. They get a large proportion of grain during the harvest months, their earnings having a money value of Rs. 5 as compared with Rs. 3 earned by a free hand. Most families too have cows and rights of pasturage, and pigs are kept by nearly all. A patch of garden land keeps them in coarse vegetables, and during the winter season they get occasional jobs as palanquin bearers."

The local labourers are still paid in kind, but the outsiders whose number in the district is not less are mostly paid in cash. The agricultural labourers, such as ploughmen and reapers of jute, etc., are paid one rupee per day excluding one meal consisting of either ½ seer *sattu* or cleaned rice. The village agricultural artisans such as village carpenters, barbers, washermen and cobblers still receive the same wages prevalent during Mr. O'Malley's time. The observations of Mr. O'Malley regarding the wages of the reapers and threshers of rice still hold good. But due to establishment of a number of rice mills the handpounded rice has become scarce. A few years before the handpounded rice of Kasba had great importance within and without the district but now this has lost its importance.

So far as *kamiyas* or bonded labourers are concerned the position has fundamentally changed since O'Malley's time. The notorious *kamiauti* system according to which labourers were tied down to a cultivator for some debt even from father to son was in existence for decades. Every big cultivator of Purnea has had a large number of tied labourers*. This system had been liquidated since the passing of the Bihar and Orissa Kamiauti Act, 1922. Though the hereditary *kamiyas* have been liquidated still the domestic servants in Purnea are generally called *kamiyas* and their wages are eight to ten rupees per month excluding

*Even now (1960) Purnea district has some of the largest cultivators in the State (P. C. R. C.).

food and cloth. Cowherds get four to six rupees per mensem besides food and cloth. But there is complete freedom of movement among the present day labourers. As a matter of fact their free mobility is a headache to the cultivators. In Purnea unless labourers come from outside occasionally, many crops will not be reaped.

The Bihar Statistical Hand Book, 1955 published by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics has given the statement of the average daily wages paid to agricultural labourers during 1953 to 1955 of Purnea district as follows*.—

Skilled Labourers.

Carpenters.			Blacksmiths.			Cobblers.		
1953.	1954.	1955.	1953	1954.	1955.	1953.	1954.	1955.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
3 0 11	2 5 7	2 6 0	3 0 11	2 5 7	2 6 0	2 5 9	1 13 7	1 14 0

Field Labourers.

Men			Women.			Children.		
1953	1954.	1955.	1953	1954.	1955.	1953.	1954.	1955.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
1 8 11	1 4 10	1 5 0	1 8 11	1 4 10	1 5 0	1 2 9	0 14 10	0 15 9

The wage structure has had a great change and ostensibly a labourer in 1960 is getting much more in money than his predecessor five decades back. But as we shall later see, the upgrading of the wages has not meant all prosperity and more of commodities for consumption or a higher standard of life because of a great depreciation of the value of money.

**Bihar Statistical Hand Book*, 1955, Table no. 214, p. 257.

EMPLOYMENT POSITION.

Employment position of the district is closely associated with the material condition of the people. In the chapter on Banking, Trade and Commerce there has been some discussion regarding the incidence of indebtedness. As such a slight repetition is inevitable here to discuss the material condition of the people. In the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911) there is a section on the material condition of the people which is of importance and is partially quoted here:—

"It is of some interest to consider the account of economic condition given by Buchanan Hamilton 100 years ago and to compare it with the present state of things. 'Even a rupee', he wrote, 'in this country is a large sum, being a ploughman's money wages for 2 months. In most parts of the district the currency consists entirely of silver and *cowries*. Towards the western parts a few of the copper coins called "payesa", worth about one-sixteenth of a rupee, are current, but even these are too large for the small money of a country, where two of them are equal to the comfortable daily board wages of a man-servant'. Slavery was common, a grown man being sold at Rs. 15 to Rs. 20, a lad of 16 years of age at Rs. 12 to Rs. 20, while a girl of 8 to 10 years of age sold for Rs. 5 to Rs. 15. 'In a few divisions towards Dinajpur, the poorest people eat little or no salt and supply its place by ashes; and in few others, towards the north-east, the lowest classes add some ashes to compensate the scantiness of the supply." The beggars of the country had a miserable lot and died like dogs. 'The Darogha or Superintendent of Police is indeed considered bound to remove dead bodies: but in many places there are no persons of a caste that can perform the office and many parts are too far removed from the officer of police. When a wretch, therefore, is about to expire he is usually carried out to the road, and allowed to die; or, if he is suddenly carried off, his death is carefully concealed until night, when the corpse is privately thrown out to the dogs. It seems to be this difficulty of managing the dead, more than a want of charity, that imposes a vast deal of distress on the necessitous poor of this district.'

'The houses of the people were of the flimsiest description, especially in the west, where they were small huts, excluding neither sun, wind, nor rain. In *thana* Damdaha there was not a single dwelling house of brick and only one brick-built shop. The Sailganj *pargana* had 'some tolerable houses with wooden frames, the walls consisting of straw placed between two rows of reeds, and plastered on both sides with clay and cowdung. These have wooden doors, but no windows, as they are considered too favourable for wanton curiosity.' Again, he remarked: 'The natives of most parts of the district would consider the proposal of any person, under the decree of Raja, to build a house of brick as little short of insanity. It is owing to the laudable exertions of Mr. Smith that a great part of the brick houses in the town of Purnea have been erected. Houses consisting of a wooden and bamboo frame, and covered with tiles, are confined to the capital.'

'A word of caution, however, is necessary against drawing inferences of extreme poverty from the character of the houses, for much of the soil is so sandy that solid mud walls can scarcely be built, while in many parts they would be most unsuitable, owing to the country being liable to inundation. A modern Bengali writer, indeed, describes, the houses of the peasant in much the same way as Buchanan Hamilton: 'In Purneah we hardly see a house with thick mud walls; the sandy soil is utterly unfit for the purpose. The houses of the poor are made of bamboo framework, thinly plastered over with mud, and thatched with straw. The peasantry live in these. A village in Purneah looks at a distance like a collection of bird-cages. The poorest of the poor live in huts made of reeds, which hardly support the thatch. These structures have one peculiar advantage; they are portable. A man, like a snail, can carry his house anywhere and raise it there anew. The middle-class men, including among other small farmers, grocers, rice-merchants, carpenters, cart-owners and law-agents, live in better houses. These are erected on ground above the reach of flood water, and constructed chiefly of the same materials, though of a superior

quality. They are dry, spacious, and comfortable; the doors and windows are made of wood instead of bamboo. Brick-built houses are very rare; even the rich content themselves with good sized bungalows built in the middle of out houses made of bamboo and straw. These latter are for servants, carts and domestic animals, holes in the wall serving the purposes of doors and windows.'*

"Special enquiries regarding the condition of the people were made in 1888, the results of which were summarized by the Collector as follows:" (1) Indigenous beggars outside the towns and business centres are unknown. They are to be found in Purnea town, and doubtless in Kishanganj, Kasba and Saifganj, and possibly in one or two other trade centres. The power and inclination to give may account for their existence at such places Outside the above places the only beggars met with are wandering vagabonds, chiefly from the west (2) When it is necessary to obtain unskilled labour for the roads or for railway operations, such labour has to be imported from the west. This I know from my connection with the district roads and my observations on the railway work. I have enquired of contractors, the reason for this, and the answer has always been that the local men have their land, and they do not care to take up work on the line. The people of Purnea are for the most part wanting in effort or desire to improve themselves. They have learnt to be content with such things as they have; they will not even, when in want, accept good wages if it involves their leaving their homes and working a little more than they are accustomed to; hence their unwillingness to take work on the line, or to enter domestic service, or to emigrate to Darjeeling. This is commonly attributed to their prosperity; I fear this is not always the case. I think that the debility produced by the deadly climate of the place assists to make the people indolent and spiritless. I have noticed a mental paralysis among the European and Eurasian residents, which I attribute to the same cause. European officers feel the tendency and overcome

*Purnea as it is, Rural Sketches, 1888.

it for a season, but I am inclined to think that in the long run they succumb to it. The early stages of the disorder are indolence and listlessness, which first manifest themselves during periods of malarious fevers only, but undoubtedly become chronic in time.

"(3) A third fact refers to emigration. Though the Chotanagpur or Dhangar coolies pass through the district in hundreds every year, voluntarily going to Darjeeling in search of employment, no Purnea cooly was ever known to do so. Some of these same Dhangars have settled in the south and west of the district, and either find the place a land of Goshen, as it is the practice to describe the district, or become fever stricken and indolent like the rest.

"(4) It is a fact that the people of Purnea are not litigious. They are mild, docile and long-suffering. To what is this fact to be attributed? I think, first, to their easy rates of rent, which do not provoke litigation; and secondly, to the indolence aforesaid. (5) The rents here are low, some times nominal and always light in relation to the capabilities of the land. (6) I never saw a worse housed population, though I have camped in many districts; this I attribute to constitutional indolence. All the above facts apply to cultivators, labourers and village craftsmen. They indicate that if the condition of the people is not better, it is not due to their wanting opportunity, but rather to their wanting inclination to improvement. The above facts show also that nothing can be charged to rack-renting, which does not exist in the district owing to the vast area of cultivable soil that is still available for settlement"

As regards the labouring and industrial classes the Collector wrote.—"It appears that, taking the year round the labourers can make both ends meet, and even become possessed of cattle, swine, and carts which must be the outcome of thrift. There are two periods of slack work—the first about June, and perhaps to some extent before that; the second in October. Against this must be set off the fact that about ten months of the year admit of savings, which enable the labourer to tide over the slack

periods. Finally, as to handicrafts, artisans in towns are extremely well off and independent and form so very small an unit of the population that I think it unnecessary to go into their case. In the country the village *barhi* or carpenter receives an allowance of 15 to 20 seers per plough at each harvest, of which there are generally two in this district; for this he keeps the plough in repair. He also makes ploughs, boats, chests and other rough carpentry. The *napit* or barber receives 10 seers of the crop at each harvest from each homestead, besides presents at *sraddhas* and marriages, and sundry other emoluments for offices performed by him according to custom. He may also hold lands. The *dhobi* or washerman receives 5 to 10 seers, according to the size of the family, from each household at each harvest. The *chamar* or cobbler has a right to the skins of all cattle dying in the village. These he sells, and he does a little rough cobbling if need be. His wife, the *chamarin,* is the hereditary midwife of the village and is paid by presents. The above form all the crafts generally found in a Purnea village Blacksmith's work is done by carpenters. There is no want, so far as I can learn in any of these classes. They are necessities to the village, and the villagers arrange that they shall live in reasonable comfort. Weavers are not a conspicuous class in this district. They do not, so far as I can learn, exist in the part where my enquiries were made. In the north they do exist and find a good sale for their coarse cloths and their coloured cloths for the use of females. Some gunny cloth is also produced by this class. If they do not find work, they take to agriculture: lands are plentiful in this district."

Further enquiries regarding the material condition of the people were made during the recent settlement. The amount needed to keep an average family of 5.4 persons in moderate comfort in a normal year was taken at Rs. 100, and as that sum represents the profits on 4 acres of land, the latter area was taken to be a subsistence holding. The average area held by ryots was found to be about 10 acres, and the net profit, after deducting rent, cesses, etc., was calculated at Rs. 175 or Rs. 35 a head, which gives a good margin for the supply of other than the necessities of life. "With this margin", remarks Mr. Byrne, in the *Settlement Report* "it is only natural to expect that the indebtedness of the Purnea cultivator is not very high. The only clue to it is that given by the amounts shown as advanced on mortgages on possession in the returns of transfers of occupancy rights, since the only security ordinarily accepted for loans is a mortgage with possession. The total amount therein recorded is less than

Rs. 95,000. The corresponding amount of recorded indebtedness was in Saran 50 lakhs, in Darbhanga just under 8 lakhs, in North Monghyr under 4 lakhs, in Muzaffarpur under 5 lakhs, and in Champaran nearly 11 lakhs. Probably these figures give a better idea of the material condition of the peasantry in Purnea, as compared with other districts, than the elaborate empirical calculation of average income. The consideration of average incomes alone is apt to lead to fallacious conclusions. The fact that the average income for the district is Rs. 35 offers but small consolation to a family whose average income per head is only ten rupees. The words of Mr. Stevenson-Moore sum up the whole question admirably:—"The difficulty of forming an accurate estimate as to the material condition of the several classes of an alien, exclusive and suspicious people is considerable; but the difficulty of adducing convincing proof of the accuracy of the estimate is well-nigh insuperable."

"As regards labourers, who are always the first to feel the pinch of scarcity, this class is not only less numerous but also less helpless in Purnea than in other North Bihar district. The great demand that exists for labourers and the high wages earned by them, especially in Surjyapur pargana, where during the paddy reaping season 6 to 8 annas a day are readily obtainable by unskilled labourers, is a surer index to this than statistics. Instances were not unknown during the settlement of men, who held small pieces of land and cultivated with borrowed bullocks on produce rents, utterly refusing to accept *parchas* or *khatians* for them as they said they could live much more comfortably as ordinary labourers earning 4 to 8 annas a day in addition to their food."*

The allergy to emigrate is still there among the people of Purnea and a certain degree of listlessness and apathy to take to other occupations have encouraged seasonal migration of labourers as already mentioned. Except agriculture, employment possibilities in other sectors (industry, commerce and transport) are rather very meagre. Except at Katihar there is practically no industry in the district. Agriculture which absorbs the majority of the rural population is still in a primitive stage and is reaching a saturating point.

In 1954 the Bihar Unemployment Committee had made some investigation in Purnea district. The table below will show the number of families surveyed, number of families affected

*O'Malley's *District Gazetteer*, *Purnea*, 1911, pp. 111—116.

sample population, persons between 16 to 60 years, totally unemployed persons and partially employed persons:—

City or town.	No. of families surveyed.	No. of families affected	Sample population.		
			Males.	Females	Total.
1	2	3	4	5	6
Purnea .	150	39	494	427	921

Persons between 16—60			Wholly unemployed persons		
Males	Females	Total.	Males	Females.	Total
7	8	9	10	11	12
306	270	576	112	11	123

Partially unemployed persons.			Total affected persons.		
Males.	Females.	Total.	Males	Females	Total
13	14	15	16	17	18
76	5	81	188	16	204

The table showing the estimated population and persons affected by unemployment as on the 1st May, 1954 for Purnea district is as follows:—

Town.	Estimated no. of families.	Estimated no. of affected families.	Raising factor.	Estimated population of families shown in column 3.		
				Males	Females.	Total.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Purnea ..	4,452	1,158	29.68	14,662	12,673	27,335

Estimated population in 16—60 age-group in families shown in column 2.			Estimated unemployed persons.		
Males.	Females.	Total	Males	Females	Total.
8	9	10	11	12	13
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1,217	59	1,276

Estimated partially employed persons			Number of illiterate persons ... totally unemployed persons		
Males	Females	Total	Males.	Females	Total
14	15	16	17	18	19
237	30	267	451	89	1,513

A sample survey of Purnea town was made of 150 families and showed that the average family size was 6.14 persons and the percentage of employable males to the male population was 61.94 and the percentage of employable female to the female population was 63.23. The percentage of adult group, male and female, to the total population was 62.54.

In the *Rural Unemployment Survey* the number of sampled villages in Purnea district was 21 while the number of villages covered was 17. Information was collected relating to the general economy of the villages, its location, communications, population, classification of land, productive assets, cottage industries, house crafts, production and acreage under each crop, sale and purchase of foodgrains, its consumption and other cash expenditure, wage rates, educated unemployed, educational institutions of the village, etc., Details about each individual member of the family were also collected. Data were also collected for the compilation of the Employment Schedules in which the man-days offered by each family as a whole in the village and the extent of its utilisation every week were collected in weekly schedules. In Purnea district 3,862 families were covered and the average number of families per village was 227.2. For the

purpose of the collection of these data the entire area of the State had been divided first into four zones according to natural conditions and Purnea fell in the North Bihar Eastern Zone comprising of the Purnea and Saharsa districts, portion of Bhagalpur district north of the Ganges and Khagaria subdivision of the Monghyr district. Each zone was again divided into sub-zones because different types of economy were found within each zone. In the North Bihar Eastern Zone the fertile area was represented by village Champabati of Dhamdaha revenue *thana* of Purnea district.

In Purnea district the number of sampled villages from where village returns were received were 12 and the number of adult population in these villages was found to be 6,083. The number of educated unemployed in those villages were as follows: Matriculate-27; Intermediate-4; Graduate-1; and Post-Graduate-1.

The survey disclosed an important feature that even the Matriculates are apathetic to remain in the villages and seek employment in the towns of which there are very few. On the average not even two unemployed Matriculates were found in the villages. The number of unemployed Intermediate, Graduate and Post-Graduate living in the villages can well be ignored

The Urban-Unemployed Survey of Bihar in 1951 had enumerated Purnea, the district headquarters as a class III town (between 20,000 to 50,000 population). This survey reveals that educated unemployment in the towns of Bihar is acute; out of 4,716 families surveyed in all the 15 towns, the head of 999, i.e., 21.2 per cent were in the educated group. The survey further indicated that while 17 per cent of unemploved and 4.85 per cent of the partially employed were Matriculates; the number of persons with higher qualification among the partially employed was less than 1 per cent for each category. But of those wholly unemployed 6.79 per cent were Intermediates, 5.01 per cent Graduates and 0.75 per cent were Post-Graduates. Persons holding degree in Commerce and Law accounted for 2 per cent of the unemployed.

Another significant feature was disclosed by the survey. Two families with Intermediate and two with Graduates and some others with Engineering and legal qualifications are in the lowest group earning Rs. 50 or less per family per month. From this one may conclude that unless the economy as a whole expands and purchasing power and productivity increases, the imparting of technical and vocational education would not by itself solve the problem of employment. There is very little possibility of

a self-generating economy in the district with agriculture of rather primitive type as the main occupation.

An investigation was made to assess the material condition of the rural people. A survey was conducted at village Rampur Kodarkati in Araria subdivision, four miles away from Araria town on the Purnea-Araria metalled road. Out of the total population of 3,250 in 1960 the number of economically active persons was 1,853 and their dependants 1,397. The majority of the population was of the group of cultivators of land wholly or mainly owned and their dependants, the number being 1,944 and the cultivating labourers being 1,199. For avocations of industry there were 5 tailors, in commerce the number was 81 as against 21 in service with their dependants were found in the village. The majority of the labourers was landless. The average type of labourers was found to be half-starved due to their allergy to work even if work was easily obtainable. It was remarkable that they should have apathy to work in the Kosi canal which is under construction within a furlong from the village. In service there were the village teachers working within three to five miles from the village. In commerce there were the village *banias* who have shops in the village.

The incidence of literacy was very low. Out of the total population only 299 or about 9 per cent as against 227 in 1951 were literates. It was also not due to the absence of schools—Araria close to the village has several schools. In the village itself there are lower and upper primary schools. About one-third of the population was found to be between the age-group of 4 to 17 which is undoubtedly the school-going age. The educational standard of the literates was also very low, the majority can hardly read and write, only two being Matriculates, both have recently passed. The majority of the village population is of Backward Class and are mostly agriculturists.

STANDARD OF LIVING.

We have seen that there had been a spiral rise in foodgrains especially from the closing year of the war. Purnea suffered badly from droughts of 1951 and 1957 due to failure of *Hathia* rains, consequently the price of foodgrains shot up. There had been a spiral rise in the price of piece goods, kerosene oil and other commodities. Under such conditions cost of living naturally rose high. We have seen that an ordinary agricultural family of four units in Mr. Nalinindra Nath Bose's time in 1926 required only Rs. 160 for an annual subsistence which now rose to about rupees seven hundred.

Both food articles and non-food articles have spiral rise in prices and consequently the cost of living has gone up to a level at which it is difficult for the majority of the people of the low-income group to make both ends meet. The purchasing capacity of the rupee has considerably gone down. The present value of the rupee is about annas three to four if it is compared with pre-war period. Thus if a worker now gets Re. 1 a day it is as good as he got three annas per day in the pre-war period. To meet the enhanced cost of living, the cost of living allowance and other allowances are given to Government servants and the employees of the local bodies. In factories the workers get ration at cheap rate.

The people getting fixed salaries and other lower middle classes, whose increased expenses are not adequately covered by the increase in dearness allowance and other allowances suffered most. Town dwellers with fixed income are now hard hit. A local investigation was made to ascertain the monthly expenditure of the middle class educated income group and it was found that a family of four adults or three adults and two minors in the town of Purnea requires at least Rs. 240 per month to meet his food and other necessary expenditure. This will be evident from the following details:—

Food (monthly)—

	Quantity	Value Rs.	a.	p.
Rice	22½ seers	13	0	0
Wheat	22½ seers	8	0	0
Dal	22½ seers	7	0	0
Vegetable	20 seers	10	0	0
Fish, meat	7½ seers	16	0	0
Fruits or *Ghee*	1½ seers	7	8	0
Tea	..	15	0	0
Milk	15 seers	7	8	0
Tiffin	..	15	0	0
Mustard oil	5 seers	12	8	0
Spices	..	5	0	0
Sugar	2 seers	2	0	0
Fuel	4 maunds	10	0	0
Kerosene oil	1 tin	8	0	0
Tobacco and betel	..	15	0	0
Total		151	8	0

Non-food articles (annual)—

		Rs.	a	p
Cloth—10 pairs, dhoti, sarees		120	0	0
Kurta 8	These two also include blouse, etc. of the women.	56	0	0
Ganji—12		30	0	0
Woollen *kurta* -1		25	0	0
Chadar, woollen—1		16	0	0
Shoe—3 pairs		36	0	0
Bedding—Carpet—1 ..	The number is kept according to duration of cloth Average life is ascertained to be four years.	12	0	0
Tosak- 1		20	0	0
Bed-sheets—4 ..		16	0	0
Napkins—8 ..		5	0	0
Quilt—1		16	0	0
Mosquito Net—1 ..		8	0	0
Pillow—1 ..		2	0	0
	Total ..	362	0	0
	Monthly	(30	0	0)
Rent		20	0	0
Washing charge		14	0	0
Education		15	0	0
Medical		8	0	0
Entertainment		4	0	0
Miscellaneous		7	8	0
		58	8	0
	GRAND TOTAL ..	240	0	0

If this family budget of the middle class urban dweller is any indicator it will be found that most of the families whose income hardly exceeds Rs 100 have a hard time to maintain their cost of living. The majority of the Government servants belong to lower division assistants (Rs. 50—90 and Rs. 80—120 scale) and so they suffer most. About 90 per cent of the families in the urban areas belong to the lower and lower middle class. Under existing cost of living the margin of income over expenditure appears to be negligible. A large number of families have deficit budgets and consequently have to take to resort to borrowings for unforeseen expenses. Housing difficulties, high rent and increased cost of living make their condition difficult. The monthly rental that the average middle class and the lower middle class men have to pay is about one fifth of their monthly

income or even more. After spending money on other necessities of life such as education, medicine, conveyance charge, etc., they are left with a very small or no margin at all to fall back on at the time of adversity. This is also one of the basic reasons for the incidence of corruption among the low paid Government service holders. Without planned family and a subsidiary income a middle class man of average income is bound to get into debts.

The lot of the class IV officers of the Government and their counterparts in the business concerns are not as badly off in the urban areas as it is expected to be With the recent increase in their cost of living allowance they get about Rs. 60 per month They usually supplement their income in shape of food and lodging by doing part-time work in the morning or evening either in the houses of their bosses or other upper class people and thus save most of their entire emoluments Their demand for necessities for life is less than the ministerial officers So also the artisans, mechanics and labourers in urban areas are much better off than the low paid assistants in the Government or local bodies services.

The agriculturists in the rural areas are now better off than the average middle class group with a fixed income of Rs 100 or Rs 150 The high prices of agricultural products have been a boon to them. In recent years, the impact of urban life and the modern means of communication also had some bearing on the food habits and clothings Beverage like tea has become common in the villages of Purnea and the tea stalls are found even in the villages. The agricultural labourers who are mostly paid in kind had not been much affected by the high prices of foodgrain The great demand that exists for labourers and high wages earned by them is a surer index that the agricultural labourers are better off

The labourers in urban areas have different standard of living than their counterparts in the rural areas A detailed survey had been made by the Government to ascertain the material condition of the industrial labourers of Katihar and the details of the survey are elsewhere

Middle class.

There does not appear to have been any particular proper economic survey of the middle classes who supply the resources for the members in the miscellaneous occupations and also other avocations. As has been remarked by Roy Lewis and Angus Maude in *English Middle Classes* poverty can be looked at in

two ways—from the income end and from the expenditure end. Sociologists distinguish between primary and secondary poverty. The primary poverty is a consequence of not earning enough for the bare or even conventional necessities of existence, the secondary being the consequence of expensive habits. They observe "so far the sociologists have hesitated to accord middle class poverty a scientific status, but it seems likely that it would be relegated mainly to the secondary category and the result of 'thriftlessness' in the matter of rentals, house-keeping, education of children and in addition (particularly reprehensible in a people who have had advantages in life) an insidious craving for culture".*

Broadly speaking, at the moment the working class is better off than it was before the Second Great War and the middle and upper middle classes are worse off. This of course cannot be made into a generalisation because there are exceptions Some sections of the middle class may be doing well but the plight of those who are living under fixed incomes is certainly not enviable. The real net level of wage earnings (i.e., after allowing for the rise both in prices and taxation) has to be compared with the fall in the net purchasing power of the rupee. There is no doubt that the cost of living has gone far much ahead while the average income has fallen far behind. Professional incomes have not risen very much. Taking the example of the members of the Bar, they are now almost double the number than what it was two decades back and barring a few exceptions, the average income of a fairly successful lawyer is almost at the same level with that of a fairly successful lawyer two decades back. If we consider this with the background of depreciation in the value of money, we will be able to find out what is the economic status of a fairly successful lawyer today in comparison to his predecessor two decades back. So far as the Government servants are concerned, the pay scale has not had any substantial increase for most of the grades. A cost of living allowance has been allowed because of the high rise in the prices of the essential commodities but the maximum one can draw is Rs. 100 per month Considering the spiral rise in the prices of essential commodities, the cost of living allowance that is allowed to the different scales of incumbents cannot be said to be adequate. If we consider the increased taxation and analyse the salary of a married man with three children now, we will find that while his pay scale may have had a small rise, his spendable income has risen only very little, probably has not risen at all.

*Published in the Pelican series, p. 159.

One has also to remember that those middle class people who were fortunate in purchasing a plot of land or a house for themselves about a decade back are much better off than the people who will now want to buy a land and to build a house. It will be a useful investigation to find out the cost of housing, food, clothing, education expenses, taxes, etc., in 1938, 1948 and 1958 and find out how the position has differed. These figures should be taken separately for the family of a few higher income-group and for a few from the lower income-group. The present economic trends do not portend a happy future for the middle classes whether in service or outside who look forward for a fairly satisfactory and dignified retirement. Even the savings in the banks do not really mean the same amount in money value when the money was paid. The pension of Rs. 200 a month now means very much less than what a pension of Rs. 200 was two decades back. There is more unemployment among the middle classes after the age of superannuation than among the working classes or the lower middle classes. But the necessity of getting an employment after superannuation is much more because of the high rise in prices, taxes and also because the expectation of life has become longer. With limited birth control and late marriages, we will find the present age of superannuation a disadvantage. This is a distinct economic trend in the middle classes now.

A definite factor that crops up in any discussion on the present economic trends is the problem of birth rate. The birth rate in the 19th century was indeed high and slowly people in this country are realising that a large family is definitely a source of unhappiness. The idea of family limitation is still confined among the educated section although a very few of them have concretely been following the idea. The idea has to percolate down to the lower middle and the people of small income-group

But increase in taxation and spiral rise in prices have not crushed the middle classes and the reason is that increasingly the State is coming to the aid of the common man by nationalising social and other services. There has been a tremendous increase in welfare measures such as good communication, more of hospitals, more of material amenities of life which have added to all that means life to us and in a way cuts out expenditure. Medical attention is being equalised and although free education has not yet been made available, a beginning has been made in providing for free primary education. Employment chances are also on the increase and with more industrialisation beyond the frontiers of the district and a somewhat industrialisation within

the district, the old agricultural economy will change. The average man wants now to lead as much a peaceful life as possible free from troublesome Government officials and leave some material assets for his children. One of the aid to this will be more of production within and without the district and the broadening of the base of what may be described a social pyramid. The edges of the social structure have to be rounded and surely a beginning has been made by the demolition of the classic institution of the *zamindars*. The abolition of the *zamindari* has brought in a lot of changes which are yet to take concrete shapes. We are passing through a period of necessary turmoil as projects for all round development are afoot All this will mean naturally more of taxation and somewhat tightening of the belt. People in other countries have undergone much more privations. India is one of the few countries that won freedom without violence and remained a member of the Commonwealth Different countries and institutions have been contributing for the development of India which is still in an underdeveloped state. Naturally at the present time the economic trends have to be fluid and a firm generalisation should not be attempted.

EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGE.

The Employment Exchange Office was started at Katihar in 1950 under the charge of the District Employment Officer. The Employment Exchange under the Directorate of the State Government is meant to be a span between the employers and the unemployed. The departments of the Central Government normally notify the Exchange their vacancies which do not come under the purview of the Public Service Commission or other competitive examinations through Employment Exchange but such obligation was not imposed either in the case of State Government, local bodies, quasi-Government concerns and private concerns. But in 1959 the Parliament passed a legislation, namely, the Employment Exchange (Compulsory Notification of Vacancies) Act which was published in the *India Gazette,* dated 3rd September, 1959 which made it obligatory on both private and public sectors to notify their vacancies through Employment Exchange. But in case of private sectors there are provisos under which they are not bound to notify their all vacancies. In the private sector the employers employing more than 25 persons are obliged to notify the vacancies. This enactment has been enforced in Bihar from June, 1960. In the public sector it is obligatory for the State Government now to notify the vacancies.

The Katihar Employment Office usually attracts a large number of registrations every year and the sole attraction appears to be the services under the two systems of the North Eastern and the North East Frontier Railways with the headquarters office of the District Traffic Superintendent at Katihar. The railways notify to the Employment Exchange, Katihar, all the vacancies in class IV jobs (Khalasis, water-men, watch men, peons, etc.) and lower grade technical jobs (fitter, wire-man, blacksmith, carpenter, turner, motor driver, etc.). It is found that for class IV jobs of railway, there is a competition among the Matriculates and above through the Employment Exchange.

The table below has been supplied by the Katihar Employment Exchange Office showing the working of the Katihar Employment Exchange:—

TABLE I.

——	No. of Employment Exchange.	No. of Registration.	No. of placement	No. of vacancies notified
April 1950 to December, 1950 .	One	5,394	2,600	3,974
1951	One ..	8,520	4,763	4,972
1952	One .	8,338	3,879	4,030
1953	One .	8,098	2,557	3,202
1954	One .	6,865	1,237	1,273
1955	One .	6,686	513	1,202
1956	One ..	5,942	620	1,377
1957	One ..	7,865	487	802
1958	One .	7,246	229	1,377
1959	One ..	4,504	123	506
1960 January, 1960 to May, 1960.	One ..	1,561	83	577

From the above table it can be seen that the number of registration is much too large in comparison to the number of vacancies notified. In 1959, 4,504 persons had registered themselves but only 123 persons were placed against 506 vacancies notified. In 1958 as many as 7,246 persons had registered themselves while only 229 persons were placed as against 1,377 vacancies notified. From 1955 the number of placement had a

perceptible decline. From 1950 to 1954 the incidence of registration and placement was both high. The reason is that according to an executive instruction the North Eastern Railway system, the predecessor of the North East Frontier Railway too, used to fill up their vacancies through the Employment Exchange. There is no such executive instruction operating now and that explains the decline in the placement from 1955 onwards.

The following tables supplied by Katihar Employment Exchange Office are of interest.

TABLE II (*a*).

Registration according to educational standard.

	Matric.	Over-Matric	Non Matric	Female	
				Matric.	Over Matric
1	2	3	4	5	6
1957	649	105	215	6	1
1958	510	73	235	4	
1959	461	63	190	1	2

TABLE II (*b*).

Placement according to same standard.

1957	25	9	38	..	..
1958	29	1	33	.	..
1959	9	1	28	..	1

TABLE III.

	Registration.	Notified.				
		*C. G.	*S. G.	Q and L.B.	Private.	Total.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1957	7,865	522	266	.	13	802
1958	7,246	831	540	..	6	1,377
1959	4,504	142	343	7	14	506

Vacancies filled.					Out-standing.	Employer.
*C. G.	*S. G.	*Q. G. and L. B.	Private.	Total.		
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
468	18	..	1	487	1,084	106
191	38	..	..	229	1,098	78
87	34	..	2	123	1,995	88

*C. G.—Central Government; S. G.—State Government; Q. & L. B.—Quasi and Local Bodies.

For analysis we have taken the figures from 1957 to 1959. Out of 7,865 persons registered in 1957 according to educational standard there were 649 Matriculates, 105 over Matriculates and 215 were non-Matriculates. Out of 487 placements in 1957 there were 26 Matriculates, 9 over Matriculates and 38 non-Matriculates. In 1958 out of 7,246 persons registered 510 were Matriculates, 73 over Matriculates and 235 non-Matriculates while the placement figures were 29, 1 and 33 respectively. Similarly in 1959 out of 4,504 persons registered 461 were Matriculates, 63 over Matriculates and 190 non-Marticulates as against placement figures of 9, 1 and 28 respectively.

While taking the number of notifications and placements sectorwise it will be seen that both vacancies notified and vacancies filled by the Central Government are higher than the State Government and local bodies. In 1957 the notified vacancies of the Central Government were 522 as against 468 vacancies filled; in 1958 the number of notified vacancies were 831 as against 191 vacancies filled and in 1959 the notified vacancies figure was 142 against 87 vacancies filled. The notified vacancies of the State Government in 1957 were 266, in 1958, 540 and in 1959 only 343 as against only 18, 38 and 34 vacancies filled.

INDUSTRIAL LABOURERS OF KATIHAR.

Katihar is the most important industrial centre in the whole of North Bihar. Here are located all the jute mills in Bihar excepting one, a match factory, flour mills, etc., In terms of employment and nature and value of goods produced Katihar has a considerable importance. The Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Government of Bihar had conducted socio-economic investigations from April, 1956 to March, 1957. The purpose of the socio-economic survey was to find out necessary weights for construction of cost of living index number for the persons concerned. The investigations were confined to the factories registered with the Chief Inspector of Factories, Bihar.*

The number of workers employed in the registered factories at Katihar at the time of the survey was found to be 3,450. This number excluded administrative, clerical and purely supervisory staff and also the personnel of Katihar Match Works and Jamuna Flour Mills which were closed at the time of the survey.

In order to ascertain the income and expenditure of the labourers schedules of enquiry were prepared. Incomes were

*Report on Income, Expenditure and Indebtedness Survey of the Industrial Worker families at Katihar by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Government of Bihar (1959).

broadly divided into wage and non-wage incomes. Both the wage and non-wage incomes included receipts in kind, evaluated at the prices current at the time of the receipt. Expenditure was broadly lumped up into the following groups:—food, fuel and lighting, housing, clothing, bedding, shoes and umbrella, household requisites and miscellaneous expenditure. The following table will give the distribution of the samples according to family sizes as well as according to income-groups.

TABLE (*a*).

Family size.	Number of families.
2-3	91
4-5	129
6-7	78
8 9	25
10 and above	15
Total	338

TABLE (*b*).

Income-groups (Rs. per month).	Number of families.
51—100	231
101—150	64
151—200	31
201—250	6
251—300	4
301—350	1
351—400	1
Total	338

The average size of the family for all families taken together worked out at 5.03. It varied from 2.68 for the families in the lowest size-group to 11.20 for the families in the biggest size-group. The average number of earners per family for all the families taken together worked out at 1.38. It varied from 1.03 earners per family for the families in the size-group 2-3 to 2.54 per family for the families in the size-group 10 and above. Out of the total number of earners per family 1.28 were males, 1.25 adults and 0.03 adolescents and 0.10 were females, all adults. There were no female adolescents or children earners.

The average number of room per family worked out at 1.64 for all the families taken together, with a variation from 1 45 rooms per family for the families in the size-groups 2-3 to 2 60 rooms per family for the families in the size-groups 10 and above. The average area of living space occupied per family also increased from 132.99 square feet for the families in the size-groups 2-3 to 285.20 square feet for the families in the size-group 10 and above, the average area for all the families taken together being 182 19 square feet The average area of living space occupied per person varied from 49.60 square feet for the families in the lowest size-group to 25.46 square feet for the families in the size-group 10 and above.

The average income per family for all the families taken together worked out at Rs. 99.72 per month. It varied from Rs. 76.51 per month for the families in the size group 2-3 to Rs. 164.45 per month for the families in the size-group 10 and above. The variation according to income-groups was from Rs. 75.65 per family per month for the families in the income-group Rs. 51—100 to Rs. 384.00 per family per month for the families in the income-group Rs 351—400. The average income per family increased both according to family sizes as well as according to groups. Obviously the increase in income per family according to income-group was much higher than an increase in income per family according to family size-groups

Out of the total income Rs. 90 02, i.e., 90 per cent was contributed by the wage account and Rs. 9.70, i.e , nearly 10 per cent came from non-wage account. The variation in wage income per family worked out at from Rs. 72.39 for the families in the size-group 2-3 to Rs. 148.55 for the families in the size group 10 and above and from Rs. 69.57 for the families in the income-group Rs. 51—100 to Rs. 279.00 for the families in the income-group Rs. 351—400. The variation in non-wage income worked out at from Rs. 4.12 for the families in the size-group 2-3 to Rs. 28 39 for the families in the size-group 8-9 decreasing thereafter to Rs. 15.90 for the family in the size-group 10 and above. It varied from Rs. 6.08 for the families in the income-group Rs. 51—100 to Rs. 105.00 for the families in the income-group Rs. 351—400. Except for the income-group Rs. 351—400 the dependence on non-wage incomes was quite inconsiderable and on the average 1 per cent of the income of a family was contributed by land, nearly 2 per cent by livestock, nearly 4 per cent by housing, about 1 per cent by professions and about 2 per cent by miscellaneous non-wage sources.

Income *per capita* for all the families taken together worked out at Rs. 19.83 per month. It varied from Rs. 28.55 *per capita* for the families in the size-group 2-3 to Rs. 14.68 *per capita* for the families in the size-group 10 and above, decreasing with the increase in the family size. On the other hand it increased from Rs. 17.76 *per capita* for families in the income-group Rs. 51—100 to Rs. 42.67 *per capita* for the families in the income-group Rs. 351—400.

Income per earner for all the families taken together worked out at Rs. 72.26 per month. Except for the biggest size-group, i.e., size-group 10 and above, the income per earner did not differ much from size-group to size-group. The size-group 8-9 has the highest income per earner varying from Rs. 69.40 for the families in the income-group Rs 51—100 to Rs. 384.00 for the families in the income groups Rs. 351—400.

The details of incomes according to family size-groups were as follows:—

Income groups (Rs. per month).	Per family.	*Per capita.*	Per earner.
51—100	75 65	17.76	69.40
101—150	126.3"	20 42	76.59
151—200	161.10	23 90	69.74
201—250	226 46	27 19	75.49
251—300	271 31	27 83	72.35
301—350	320.50	-4 65	106.83
351—400	384.00	43 00	384 00
401—500	..	..	..
501 and above	..	..	..
TOTAL	99.72	19.83	72.26

Expenditure.—Various items of necessary expenditures, viz, food; fuel and lighting: housing; clothing; footwear; bedding: shoes and umbrella; household requisites and miscellaneous were taken into account. The average expenditure of the different family size-groups per month was as follows:—

AVERAGE EXPENDITURE PER FAMILY AND *PER CAPITA* ACCORDING TO FAMILY SIZE (*In Rupees and Naye Paise*)

Family size.	Food.	Fuel and lighting.	Housing.	Clothings, beddings, umbrellas, shoes, etc.		Household requisites.		Miscellaneous.	*Total per family.	*Per capita.*
				(a)	(b)	(a)	(b)			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
2-3	42.21	5.24	4.03	8.56	4.30	0.87	0.35	11.29	67.42	25.16
4-5	53.38	5.97	4.59	9.00	5.77	1.07	0.32	12.77	82.80	18.65
6-7	70.97	7.22	6.26	12.03	6.24	1.44	0.19	16.65	107.53	16.65
8-9	90.11	8.67	6.92	15.30	6.51	1.74	0.65	17.03	129.59	15.54
10 and above ..	108.38	10.29	8.20	18.95	15.33	2.07	0.31	20.41	162.92	14.55
TOTAL ..	59.59	6.45	5.16	10.49	5.96	1.19	0.32	13.92	91.40	18.21

(a) Average estimated expenditure on the basis of inventory method.

(b) Average actual purchase during the month

*Total has been calculated by taking into account (b) columns for clothings and household requisites.

AVERAGE EXPENDITURE PER FAMILY AND *PER CAPITA* ACCORDING TO INCOME-GROUPS.

(In Rupees and Naye Paise per month.)

Income-groups (Rs. per month).	Food.	Fuel and lighting.	Housing.	Clothing, beddings umbrella, shoes, etc. (a)	Clothing, beddings umbrella, shoes, etc. (b)	Household requisites. (a)	Household requisites. (b)	Miscellaneous.	*Total per family.	*Per capita.*
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
51—100	47.63	5.76	4 31	8.27	3.70	1.03	0.19	10.16	71.75	16
101—150	74.17	7.50	6.06	13 10	8.75	1.48	0.44	18.56	115.48	18
151—200	88.76	8.19	7.62	15.76	11.95	1.54	0.60	28.98	146.10	21
201—250	122 31	10.39	9.83	19.49	30.53	2.05	0.36	22.93	196 35	22
251—300	145.31	9.22	8.[illegible]	29.11	8.94	1 98	0.75	19.59	191.04	19·6
301—350	174.81	9.75	12.00	30.09	12.75	1.47	.	35.37	244 68	18·8
351—400	152.28	7.75	20.00	43 23	..	2.37	12.25	19.60	211.88	23·54
401—500 .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
501 and above ..	.	.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
TOTAL ..	59.59	6.45	5.16	10.49	5.96	1.19	0 32	13.92	91.40	18.00

(a) Average estimated expenditure on the basis of inventory method.

(b) Average actual purchase during the month.

*Total has been calculated by taking into account (b) columns for clothings and household requisites.

The average total expenditure per family varied according to family size from Rs. 162.92 per month for the families in the size-group 10 and above to Rs. 67.42 per month for the families in the size-group 2-3. In respect of income-groups the variation works out at from Rs. 244.68 per month for the families in the income-group Rs. 301—350 to Rs. 71.75 per month for the families in the income-group Rs. 51—100. The overall average expenditure per family for all the families taken together works out at Rs. 91.40 per family per month. Out of this total Rs. 59.59 or a little over 65 per cent goes to food items. Next comes fuel and lighting group with an expenditure of Rs. 6 45 per month, i.e., about 7 per cent of the total expenditure Next comes clothing, bedding, shoes and umbrella group with an expenditure of Rs. 5.96 per month amounting to about 6 1,2 per cent of the total expenditure of the family. Housing comes next with an expenditure of Rs 5.16 per month, which comes to a little over 5 1/2 per cent of the total expenditure of the family. Household requisites take only 0 32 per month, i.e., less than one-third per cent of the total expenditure Miscel laneous items of expenditure account for as much as nearly 15 per cent of the total expenditure of the family. It may be mentioned here that the total expenditure given here includes not only the cash and kind expenditure but also the imputed expenditure as for example the approximate imputed rent of the owner's dwelling. Housing expenditure also includes house taxes levied by the local bodies and the repair charges where they have to be paid by the owner of the house.

The *per capita* expenditure works out at Rs. 18.21 per month for all the families taken together. It decreases from Rs. 25.16 per month for the families in the size-group 2-3 to Rs. 14.55 for the families in the size-group 10 and above. On the other hand, it increases from Rs. 16.84 for the families in the income-group Rs. 51—100 to Rs. 23.97 for the families in the income-group Rs. 201—250, then gradually decreases to Rs. 18.82 for the families in the income-group Rs. 301—350 and then again it increases to Rs. 23.54 for the families in the income-group Rs. 351—400.

The average debt per family works out at Rs. 72.06 for all the families taken together. It shows a variation from Rs. 27 50 for the families in the size-group 2-3 to Rs. 171.46 for the families in the size-group 10 and above. The movement of the burden of debts per family with the size of the family fails to show a regularity because of the peculiar behaviour of the families in the size-group 8-9. When we come to the income-group analysis

of burden of debts we find that per family burden of debt increases from Rs. 60.70 for the families in the income-group Rs 51—100 per month to 101 37 for the families in the income-group Rs 101—150 per month Then it gradually declines to Rs. 42.00 for the families in the income group Rs 201—250 per month. The next income-group Rs. 251—300 reports almost nil debt with a figure of only Rs 0 25 per family But the highest income group shows a record debt burden of Rs 600 00 per family, the whole burden being due to marriage expenses

The *per capita* indebtedness for all the families taken together works out at Rs 14.35 It increases from Rs 10 26 for the families in the size-group 2 3 to Rs 17 56 for the families in the size-group 6-7 Then it shows a decrease to Rs 11 25 for the families in the size-group 8-9 and then it again increases to Rs 15.31 for the families in the size-group 10 and above Coming to the income-group analysis we find that *per capita* burden of debt increases from Rs 14 20 per month for the families in the income group Rs 51—100 to Rs 16 38 for the families in the income group Rs 101—150 Then it decreases to Rs 5 04 for the families in the income group Rs 201—250, the next group shows practically nil debt with a figure of 0 03 while the income-group Rs 301—350 reports a *per capita* figure of Rs 46 15, a record figure The highest income group, i e Rs 351—400 reports complete freedom from debts.

It is interesting that marriage is responsible for a little over 41 per cent of the total debts This shows the bondage of social customs

Sickness comes next with nearly 20 per cent of the total debts. Festivals come next with about 6 per cent of the total debts. Funerals account for a little over 3 per cent of the total debts while miscellaneous causes account for over 29 per cent of the total debts This miscellaneous group covers the practice to take advance delivery from the shop keepers on promise of payment in the next month when they receive their wages

This survey of the industrial workers at Katihar shows that the average size of the family of a worker employed in the registered industrial establishments in Katihar is 2 69 males and 2 34 females. The average number of earners, including earning dependents per family is 1 38 The average income per month per family is Rs. 99 72 nP , and the average expenditure per month per family is Rs 91 40 nP leaving a surplus of Rs 8 32 nP per month in the budget of an average worker family. The average indebtedness per family amounts to Rs 72 06 nP.

Details of this survey have been given because Katihar is the only place that could be described as industrialized within Purnea district. There is no reason to think that the industrial workers at Kishanganj will be differing largely from the above picture. If the conclusions of the survey are correct the Kishanganj industrial worker is not financially very badly off because there is a small surplus per month in the budget of an average worker family. In a survey of this type, there are, of course, loopholes. But it does give an acceptable general picture of the industrial worker.

NATIONAL PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.

The independence of India in 1947 brought a basic change in the system of Government, the prior Police State had been changed into a Welfare State. Since the nation lives in villages so it became essential to frame co-ordinated schemes for all-round development of the rural areas which had been very much neglected in the past. A Welfare State postulates also a decentralised form of Government. Prior to independence the activities of the State were mostly concentrated at the district and subdivisional level. Even for development work the police *thanas* were taken as units and the police were the machinery through which the administration moved. In the Police State the maintenance of law and order was naturally given top priority.

The outlook of public administration in a Welfare State is much wider and various economic plans have been undertaken and they are sought to be implemented through the Community Development Projects and National Extension Service Blocks consisting of a number of villages. It was realised that this required a large army of both the technical and non-technical staff and both the State and Central Governments provided agencies for training of the personnels. The National Extension Service and Community Development Projects have been the most remarkable feature in the rural development since independence has been achieved. The importance of the village as an administrative unit has been underlined and the village has been put definitely on the administrative map. The development plan and its administration has now been taken right to the villages. The idea is that the cultivator in his village may get the services of a trained agricultural, medical, public health, co-operative, industries, animal husbandry and other specialised personnel. An integrated administration at the block level with the accent on all-round rural improvement is sought to be created with the idea to extend the same to the village level.

So far as the organisational pattern is concerned it may be mentioned that the National Planning Commission at the Centre and the State Planning Board in the State are functioning in a co-ordinated manner for giving the proper guidance. At the district level the District Magistrate assisted by a District Planning Committee consisting of officials and non-officials is responsible for framing and execution of the scheme sketched in the plan. At the block level the Block Development Officer is directly in charge of the development schemes and functions as a co-ordinator at the village level.

The district is to be divided into 38 blocks by the end of the Second Five-Year Plan. At present, there are 26 Community Development Blocks and each is under the administrative control of a Block Development Officer. The details of the blocks along with the pre-extension and agricultural blocks with their names, date of inauguration, area and population are given below:—

Subdivision.	Name of C. D. Block.	Date of start.	Area in acres. (Sq. miles.)	Population.
1. Sadar (Purnea)	1. Krityanandanagar	April, 1954 ..	1,27,932	68,984
	2. Baisi ..	2nd October, 1957 ..	65,000	93.183
	3. Kasba ..	2nd October, 1957 ..	72,960	64,941
	4. Dhamdaha ..	May, 1956 ..	87,482	88,890
	5. Darhara Kothi ..	2nd October, 1956 ..	56,485	60,230
	6. Khoksibagh ..	October, 1955 ..	142	67,112
	7. Banmankhi ..	1st April, 1959 ..	90,371	114,568
	8. Bhawanipur ..	1st April, 1960 ..	[illegible]7,574	86,000
	9. Rupauli ..	1st October, 1960 ..	N.A.	N. A.
2. Katihar ..	1. Katihar ..	November, 1954 ..	102	54,434
	2. Azamnagar ..	2nd September, 1956	71,040	78,055
	3. Kadwa ..	2nd October, 1956 ..	133	81,000
	4. Pranpur ..	October, 1955 ..	83	57,249
	5. Manihari ..	2nd October, 1957 ..	56 045	67,111
	6. Amdabad ..	October, 1957 ..	78	48,753
	7. Falka ..	1st April, 1960 ..	N.A.	N.A.
	8. Barari ..	1st October, 1960 ..	N.A.	N.A.

Subdivision.	Name of C.D. Block.	Date of start.	Area in acres. (Sq. miles)	Population.
3 Kishanganj ..	1. Pothia ..	June, 1954 .	146	48,353
	2. Kochadhamin ..	1st April, 1957 ..	67,257	70,447
	3. Kishanganj ..	1st April, 1958 ..	43,602	48,415
4. Araria ..	1. Raniganj	November, 1954 .	185	78,026
	2. Bhargama ..	14th October, 1955 ..	92	64,504
	3. Forbesganj .	26th January, 1957	110	65,513
	4 Kursakanta .	1st October, 1959 .	40,983	37,840
	5 Narpatganj ..	14th May, 1958	146	76,648
	6. Araria	1st April, 1960 .	199	79,236
		Pre-Extension Blocks		
1. Katihar .	1. Korha	1st October, 1960	Not available	
2. Araria .	1. Jokihat	1st April, 1960	Ditto	
	2 Amour ..	2nd October, 1960	Ditto.	
		Agri. Extension Blocks		
1. Katihar ..	1. Barsoi .	1st April, 1960 .	Not available	
	2. Balrampur .	2nd October, 1960	Ditto	
2. Sadar (Purnea)	1 Baisa	2nd October, 1960	Ditto	
3. Kishanganj ..	1 Bahadurganj ..	1st April, 1960 ..	Ditto.	
	2. Dighal Bank .	1st April, 1960 ..	Ditto.	
	3. Thakurganj	2nd October, 1960	Ditto.	
	4. Torhagachh ..	1st April, 1960 ..	Ditto.	
4. Araria ..	1. Sikti	1st April, 1960 ..	Ditto.	
	2. Palasi .	2nd October, 1960 .	Ditto.	

MISCELLANEOUS OCCUPATIONS.

Miscellaneous occupations cover such occupations which have not been so far covered under the major occupations, viz., agriculture, industry, commerce and transport. They cover public administration, learned professions, domestic and personal services, etc. Persons in the miscellaneous occupations form a very small percentage in the employment structure but have an important bearing on the society and administration. They form the enlightened intelligentsia section of the community and mostly come from the middle classes which is the backbone of the society. They have usually supplied the leadership in society.

The *District Census Handbook of Purnea,* 1951 gives the statistics of persons engaged in public administration and local bodies administration as follows:—

—	Total.		Employers.		Employees.		Independent workers.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Health Education and Public Administration	5,954	1,120	30	6	4,718	315	1,206	799
1. Medical and other Health Services ..	1,578	928	30	6	342	123	1,206	799
2. Educational Services and Research ..	2,473	135	..	..	2 473	135	..	..
3. Police (other than village watchmen) ..	441	..	.	..	441	..	..	..
4. Village officers and servants including village watchmen.	392	..	..	.	392	..	..	..
5. Employees of municipalities and local boards.	145	50	..	..	145	50	..	..
6. Employees of State Government .	45*	..	..	..	45	..	..	..
7. Employees of the Union Government ..	880*	7	.	..	880	7	..	..

*It appears that the figures have been misplaced and the State Government employees number 880 while the Union Government employees number 45.

Personal Services.

Personal services include domestic servants, barbers, washermen, tailors, keepers of hotel and restaurants. In 1951 census except tailors all had been enumerated under services not elsewhere specified. The statistics were as follows:—

—	Total.		Employers.		Employees.		Independent workers.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Services not elsewhere specified ..	13,588	2,933	193	94	8,468	1,007	4,927	1,832
0-Services otherwise unclassified ..	3,172	137	..	..	3,172	137	..	..
1-Domestic services	4,040	722	..	..	4,040	722	..	..
2-Barbers and beauty shops	2,990	1,101	66	47	366	79	2,558	975
3-Laundry and Laundry services ..	975	537	5	..	15	..	955	537
4-Hotels, restaurants and eating houses ..	320	71	..	192		57	.	..

Religious, Charitable and Welfare Services.

In 1951 census the number of persons associated with religious, charitable and welfare services was 1,356 consisting of 1,051 males and 305 females. There are a number of religious institutions both of Hindu and Muslim communities.

The Public Servant.

The Second Great War followed by the rapid political changes in India culminating in the declaration of independence in 1947, and the change of the character of the Police State to a Welfare State and the adoption of the Five-Year Plans for an all-round development starting right from the villages has meant a real change in the frontiers between the public service and other avenues of work where the middle class people find employment There has been an enormous increase in the number of jobs including those that have been created in every district which are on the border line of the public service. Purnea which was commonly taken to be a class III district has also felt the impact of the great changes in the public service and now owing to the development of the Community Development Projects there are public servants and quite a number of them right in the heart of every *thana* attached to the Block Development Offices. While they are at the village level, it has to be mentioned that at the top also there has been great increase of administrative officers at the district headquarters at district level. At the epitome is the District Magistrate who, however, does not lay down any policy excepting in smaller matters but he is meant to implement the policy of the State and to see to the co-ordination of different sections of the Government machinery at the district level. The number of the public servants is negligible when we take them as against the educated population of the district. Nevertheless, this small percentage is a very important element because of their rights, obligations and functions. Often the civil servants are misunderstood and are taken as bureaucrats but one has to realise that they are mere limbs of a bigger machinery It is, however, true that the administrative service has been called upon to do various types of work in the last two decades which, with its numbers, resources and training, the civil services cannot be expected to do efficiently. Overnight a Magistrate has been called upon to run a cloth business or control price measures. He may have to take charge of a jute mill or business concern without an initial training. The apparent slackness of work and lack of efficiency will naturally be criticised by the intelligent public and particularly the business world in the private sector. The restrictive controls on prices of essential commodities and their movements has made the position of the officers rather unenviable. The public servant as a class has a very important effect on the society and in spite of the poorer scale of earnings there is a craze for the educated unemployed to get into one of the white collared posts in Government service. The employment possibilities in the

public sector have become very large now under the Five-Year Plans. It is however, unfortunate that there should be a perceptible deterioration in the stuff that is now generally available in the market to fill up the posts. It is also true that the exigencies of administration do not leave much opportunity to give the recruits a proper training for the job. The number of temporary incumbency in the public service in a district even like Purnea is very large and the result has not always been very happy.

The appeal of the white collared job can only slacken in preference to the job of the skilled manual workers or trades men if there are employment opportunities in those avenues. The Employment Exchange at Katihar registers every year thousands of Matriculates who rather would be a water-man or a *khalasi* in the railways. This is so because any new entrant, even in a class IV job in the railways gets near about Rs. 100 per month. It is only when there will be more availability of such jobs and a better development of the sense of prestige in such jobs that the middle class, the lower middle class and the working class will not desire to enter the civil service. With our present standard of living and the existing circumstances in the employment market, the time is still far off when there will be a lesser craze for such class to enter into the administrative services.

The Professions.

The Oxford English Dictionary describes profession to be a vocation in which a professed knowledge of some department of learning or science is used in its application to the affairs of others or in the practice of an art found upon it. The professions will include the lawyers, teachers, doctors, priests, journalists, authors, etc. The total number of such professionals as recorded in the *District Census Handbook of Purnea* is very small and probably some of the figures are under-estimate. Nevertheless, in spite of their very small number the professions have a very great impact on the district economy and have always supplied the leadership They are usually filled up by the educated middle class "from whom come most of the nation's brains, leadership and the organising ability".

From the tables in the *District Census Handbook of* 1951 it will be found that the number of people following some of the professions enumerated above is not large. Purnea had rather a notoriety as an unhealthy district and the incidence of diseases was quite high. Considering that aspect, the number of Doctors

*Quotation from *The English Middle Classes* by Roy Lewis and Angus Maude (Pelican series).

even including the Homeopaths, *Vaids*, and *Hakims* is not large. It may be mentioned here that the medicos in Government services have a certain amount of what is known as "chair practice", i.e., an unearned income of the Doctor only because he is in that particular post. "Chair practice" will include money earned by granting medical certificates, etc. There can be no two questions about the fact that because the medicos in Government services are allowed private practice, there has been somewhat negligence of the hospitals and dispensaries. No such Doctor in the district does any research work worth its name. The lure of private practice has apparently led to a certain amount of deterioration of the medical institutions and negligence of patients. It is only very recently (1960) that the State Government has banned the Civil Surgeon now designated as the Senior Executive Medical Officer from earning money by private practice. Unless and until there is a complete taboo on Government medicos from doing private practice, there will not be a good field for Doctors in the private sector. As mentioned before, Doctors in the private sector do suffer from certain disadvantages in their competition with the doctors in the public sector. Purnea has been a good field for Doctors generally. In the recent decades, there has, however, been a fall in the general practice of the Doctors owing to the increase of the number of Government hospitals and dispensaries. With the development of the blocks in the interior of the district, there are more Government Doctors now available in the mofussil. Hospital-mindedness is also on the increase. It is expected that there will be a restriction in the private practice of the Doctors in Government service in the near future.

There is a certain amount of laxity regarding the control of the medicos by statutory obligation. Drugs Control Order is there but there are very few prosecutions. Although there is a restriction, everyone knows that the people who are not qualified to practise as Doctors do make money by prescribing medicines, giving injections and dressing of wounds, etc. The subordinate staff attached to the public dispensaries and hospitals has been rather notorious in this respect. There is hardly any restriction on even the unqualified and unregistered Homeopaths, *Vaids* and *Hakims* from doing practice in giving injections or prescribing allopathic medicines.

Teaching profession has not attracted the best talents. The pay of the teachers in the village schools is extremely poor and there is no gain saying that a village school master gets lesser pay than the peon or a chowkidar in the Government offices. The

cost of living allowance in the case of the teachers is lower than the cost of living allowance permissible to the peons and other class IV employees. There has been an enormous expansion of schools, lower schools, secondary schools and colleges. But the scale of pay has not had much improvement. It is said that pay lower than what is signed for is often given in the private schools and colleges. There is hardly any public opinion against the exploitation of the teachers who have to mould the children for the future. The recent influx of ill-staffed and ill-equipped educational institutions of various grades has found employment for some but definitely it has not upgraded the standard of teaching or the economic condition of the teachers. Many of the institutions do not allow the necessary intellectual or academic freedom for the teachers either.? No research is encouraged.

Educational institutions have to depend on the State for support and naturally there is a considerable degree of State control or regulation.

There are very few adherents to some of the callings which are more or less free from direct State control. They are priests, journalists, authors and artists, etc. Their number in this district is extremely small but in spite of their small number, they exert a certain amount of influence on the people. Law as a profession has always been an attraction in spite of the many onslaughts on it. The importance of lawyers in a district where literacy is small cannot be over-emphasised. It is true that recently the lawyers' practice has been very much affected because of the spiral rise in prices and the starting of the *Panchayati* courts where they cannot practise. The lawyers have not only been the bridge between the court and the litigants but have always given the necessary leadership for matters political or social. The work of the lawyers is extremely arduous and it will be a pity if a good percentage of the best talents does not continue to go over to this profession. The cost of litigation and legal advice may have been out of proportion in cases of some but generally speaking they cannot be said to be a burden or an unmitigated evil. The number of lawyers as mentioned in the *District Census Handbook* appears to be an under-estimate.

Legal services had been enumerated in 1951 census along with business services and their total number was 833 (all males), out of which 435 were employees and 398 independent workers. From the break-up figures it is presumed that the independent workers (398) were enumerated under the legal services. In 1960 the number of advocates (only 6) and pleaders was 242 and

mukhtears 77.* The mukhtears are now not being recruited as the qualifying examination has since been abolished. The profession of law in general had received a great setback due to abolition of *zamindari* but in Purnea district owing to transfer of some of the litigious *thanas* of Kishanganj subdivision to West Bengal, the lawyers of Purnea and particularly of Kishanganj have lost a good source of income. A good number of criminal cases used to come from the transferred areas of Islampur and Chopra *thanas*.

Study of law is usually taken up by the average graduates not necessarily with a view to join the Bar, but as a possible avenue to follow if no suitable job is available. Another factor that has to be mentioned is that people bent on doing business, seldom join the Bar and seldom do lawyers from the Bar change the profession for trade and commerce. Members of the Bar have been found to frequently change their professions in their early career and get into public service but seldom do they become business men or managers in business concerns The present economic trend is that a man on the average does not want to become a lawyer if he can help it and this is the reason why very few of the best of talents in their academic career are lately being drawn to the profession of law. They would rather try for jobs in public sector or in business firms. This is definitely a bad omen because lawyers have remained and shall remain a very important body in the district economy that will supply the leadership.

Other Professions.

The number of State employed Scientists and Researchers or Researchers on their own are practically nil in this district. Although the social prestige of a Scientist or a Researcher is very high, his financial status is not very enviable and certainly is not. on the average, an improvement on the status of a Lecturer or a Professor in a college. That is why there is no craze to take up the profession of being a lonely scientific research worker.

Architects, Engineers and Accountants have remained at a small numerical strength and they are mostly State-employed. Their financial status is not as good as that of a Doctor. There was very little scope for their employment in the private sector but now the employment chances are getting better.

Life insurance business is also another factor which has to be particularly mentioned in this section. Even before life insurance business was nationalised, Purnea was considered a good field for

*These figures have been collected from Purnea Civil Court.

insurance work. This factor still persists. Quite a large number of men are engaged directly and indirectly with the Life Insurance Corporation but it is unfortunate that their exact number is not available.

Shop-keepers and Traders.

The shop-keepers, traders, and business men have been discussed elsewhere. It has been mentioned that Purnea is essentially an agriculturist country and trade and commerce cyphon off a rather small percentage of the population. It has been mentioned also that excepting for the two rainy months there is a string of *melas* and fairs that are held at various parts of the district and often simultaneously. A villager would willingly walk 10 miles to attend a *mela* just to buy a very ordinary commodity which he could also have bought in a neighbouring *bazar*. *Mela*-mindedness is a great feature and may be described as determining an important economic trend. The *melas* and fairs mean a lot socially to the average man in Purnea district and there is always a lot of turn-over of money in some shape or other in the *melas**. It has also been mentioned elsewhere that jute is the main industry in the district and jute industry keeps engaged quite a sizeable population starting from the agriculturists who grow jute, middle men, *aratdars*, and ultimately the purchasers. There has always been a vicissitude of fortune in jute industry, prices going up and down. But this factor does not discourage the average Purnea agriculturist to grow jute if he can. This also suggests that growing jute is not an uneconomic proposition. There has been very little of what can be called to be an encroachment of big business; trade and commerce is centralised mostly in the towns of Katihar. Kishanganj and Forbesganj. Although Forbesganj has started developing only within the last one decade, there has been an enormous increase in trade and commerce at Forbesganj. Forbesganj is likely to develop as another industrial pocket.

As a class the small traders are generally prosperous. Even the economic prosperity of a *pan, biri* shop-keeper at the street corner is higher than that of a class IV employee of the State Government. If the shop happens to be in a position of advantage, the shop-keeper's lot economically is better than that of a clerk in Government service. As a matter of fact, small trade should attract more of young blood and some of the people who are to stagnate on the poor salary of an average clerk would do

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*The Forbesganj *mela* is held immediately after jute money is available in that jute pocket. A visit disclosed that thousand of jute money are spent every day by the cultivators at Forbesganj *mela* (P. C. R. C.).

well by taking a certain amount of risk by changing their avocation to that of a small shop-keeper.

In 1951 census, men in business services had been enumerated with those in legal services and their total number was 633 (all males), out of which 435 were employees and 398 were independent workers.

Domestic Services

The problem of domestic services or rather the lack of it is a definite economic trend of the present generation. The prestige of domestic services is almost gone and this has been aggravated by the fact that there are more opportunities to earn a livelihood and probably at a higher rate in other avenues than in domestic services The average domestic servants in the last generation came from a class that was used to do domestic services. As a matter of fact, there are certain castes like Kahars, Kandus, etc., who were taken to be almost synonymous as the sources of domestic servants. In Purnea district a large number of Oraon families had been brought a century before by the European planters and the descendants of these Oraons have also been prized as domestic servants both for the fields and the households in this district The poorer class among the Muslims would readily accept the domestic chore in a Muslim house than go outside the district for a job It has been mentioned elsewhere that in Purnea district there is a very deep allergy to go beyond the frontiers of the district for a job This allergy was also partially responsible for the presence of a large number of families in the poorer classes that do nothing else but domestic work from generation to generation The large farms and the factories of the European and Anglo Indian and the presence of a large number of Indian gentlemen farmers offered good employment to domestic servants. But with the beginnings of industrialisation and particularly in pursuance of the present time-spirit, the tide has gone against accepting a domestic service, as a matter of course, for men of such caste that were invariably wedded to domestic work They are now crazy for jobs in the public sector as class IV employees or as *Durwans, Chawkidars*, etc., in the factories or they would prefer to go to the railways The middle class men whose income is more or less fixed and who have been the most hard-hit class by the abnormal rise in prices cannot possibly afford to give the pay that a domestic servant would get by selling his labour to the Government as a class IV employee or to the factory as a *Chowkidar* or to the railways as a *Khalasi*, water-man or a peon. The prospective domestic servant would rather become a rickshaw-puller, a cleaner of a car or a motor

driver even if there is much harder work and insecurity of service On the average, a full-time domestic servant now costs at least Rs. 40—50 per month and very few of the middle class families with their economic depression can afford to pay more A class IV employee of the State Government will get a little above Rs. 60 to start with. If he is an employee under the Central Government, he will get about rupees one hundred He has the advantages of getting uniforms, umbrellas, lesser work, more of leave, etc. If he goes to the factories even for an unskilled job, he will get at least Rs. 60 a month. The class from where domestic servants used to flow in nowadays do not bother to think of the protection or security of service or the unearned benefits that they would have got by sticking to the families as domestic servants. The craze is to put in lesser and lesser quality and quantity of work and if possible, to join a trade union for their rights The classes or castes from whom the domestic servants come have almost forgotten their obligations of work while they have been clamouring for their rights in the public or private sector This distinct economic trend is a factor that every middle class family has now to face

The problem has become all the more acute because many of the educated ladies in the middle class families have got to earn a separate income to supplement the family income and the ladies in the family are not always available for domestic chore as they were three decades back As a matter of fact, it is a misnomer to designate the average house-wife in the middle class as a dependent on the husband or the father If she is a working-woman, she adds to the family income. If she is not and if she shares the domestic duties at home, she is adding to the income by plugging a certain amount of depletion of the family income. But at the same time it is true that the want of domestic servants in the average middle class family has started telling upon the health and of particularly that of the ladies This will not be helped unless we cut down the birth rate and the demands of domestic work from the ladies While small flats are replacing separate houses which have some advantages, there has not been the development of common cooking or messing in the same house where there are several flats tenanted by different kinds of people. Good and cheap restaurants or hotels where food could be obtained easily are also very rare and naturally the middle classes do not patronise the roadside hotels and restaurants and replace their individual cooking

Domestic services will also include the barbers, the butchers, the fish-monger, etc. The tendency for them now is to vend less

their services at the door of the customer. The barbers still continue to some extent coming round the houses and work for wages. But more and more shaving saloons are being opened which attract quite a large number of customers. Even small townships have now got shaving saloons. It may be mentioned here that the charges at the shaving saloons are slightly less than what a barber would charge if he comes to the house. Fish, meat and vegetables are commonly available in the daily markets or weekly markets and most of the customers prefer to buy the stuff at such markets. Fish is still brought to the houses to some extent but this tendency is now going down There has been no separate census of the people who sell meat, fish or vegetables, etc., at the markets Their number in the district will be uncertain if those in the weekly *hats* have to be taken. Some of them supplement their income by other sources also It is quite likely that most of them have some cultivation lands and as such a separate census is not indicated either

Washermen

The village washermen get their wages generally in kind during the harvest time. From the figures quoted before it is clear that all the washermen of the district had not been enumerated in 1951 census It appears that the customary washermen of the villages had been perhaps left out and the persons who were associated with the laundries only were enumerated Even in the laundries washing is done by the washermen through old methods.

Tailors.

In 1951 census tailoring had been enumerated in the section industry. According to 1951 census the total number of tailoring establishment was only 33 (based on census of Small-Scale Industries, 1951). The number of whole-timers was 104, part-timers 2. The figures seem to be under-rated The number of tailors in the district seems to be much larger. * Tailors are now found in almost every big village. In the *melas* dozen of tailors open their shops and get good customer.

Hotels and Restaurants

The total number of persons associated with the business of hotels and restaurants in 1951 census was 320. There is a great dearth of well-equipped hotels and restaurants The number of ordinary cheap hotels is fairly large at Katihar, Kishanganj,

Forbesganj and Purnea. The number of roadside restaurants selling indifferent food has increased considerably. In Purnea district the tea stalls outnumber the other eating houses. Owing to damp climate tea is taken by almost all the people of the district. Tea stalls are found even in the rural areas. From an enquiry made in Kishanganj town it was found that at least one thousand meals are sold every day in these cheap roadside hotels

CHAPTER X.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.

Historical Background.

As mentioned on page 687 of Hamilton's *East India Gazetteers,* Abul Fazal, in 1582 described Purnea as follows:—

> "*Sircar* Purneah, containing 9 *mahals,* revenue 6,408,793 *dams.* This *Sircar* furnishes one hundred cavalry and 5,000 infantry."

Hamilton's other description of Purnea was as follows:—"A large district in the Province of Bengal, situated about the 26th degree of north Latitude. To the north it is bounded by the Morung hills, in the Nepaul territories; on the south by Monghir and Rajemali; to the east it has Dinagepoor; and to the west Tirhoot and Boglipoor.

"This district (named also Seerpoor Dulmalpoor) forms, beyond the Ganges, the north-west boundary of Bengal, towards Behar on the one side, and the Morung country to the north Purneah comprises 5,119 square miles, of a fertile, compact, well watered flat—producing rice, oil, pulse, wheat with almost all the ordinary greens for home consumption. It produces also, opium and saltpetre for foreign commerce; to which may be added fir-masts, and other valuable timber, from the Morung forests. The northern part of this district, bordering on the Morung, is very thinly inhabited, being covered with immense woods of Saul and other timber; but such parts of this tract as have been cleared are fertile and suit extremely well for the cultivation both of rice and indigo, the latter being one of the staple commodities.

"About 1790, the result of an official inquiry in the Purnea district found 80,914 husbandmen holding leases, and 22,324 artificers paying ground rent, in 2,784 villages, and upon 2,531 square miles. Allowing five to a family, this gives more than 203 to a square mile. In 1801, the result of the replies of the Collectors in Bengal to the questions circulated by the Board of Revenue, proved that the Purneah district contained 14,50,000 inhabitants, in the proportion of seven Mahommedans to 10 Hindoos. The chief rivers are, the Cosah, and Mahananda, and the principal towns, Purneah and Tanjepoor.

"During the Mahommedan government this was a frontier military province, under the rule of a *foujdar,* subordinate to the *soubahdar,* or viceroy, but possessing a great degree of independence. Syef Khan is the most famous of the provincial rulers, and governed until his death in 1159, Bengal year, under the successive viceroyalties of Jaffer Sujah and Aliverdi Khan In 1139, he extended by conquest the limits of his jurisdiction towards Bahar beyond the Cosah, and added a considerable portion of productive territory on the side of Morung He was succeeded by Soulet Jung, on whose death the *foujdary* was usurped by Shouket Jung, or Khadim Hossein Khan. but this rebellion was quashed in A. D 1763 by Cossim Ali Khan, the reigning *Nabob* of Bengal (J. Grant, Colebrooke, &c) "

ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES.

Regarding administrative division of Purnea W. W. Hunter in the *A Statistical Account of Bengal,* Vol XV (Monghyr and Purnea), published in 1877 had mentioned that the Sadar subdivision comprised of the seven police circles *(thanas)* of Purnea. The total area of it was 2,572 square miles, with 2,634 villages or townships, and 1,57,733 houses, total population 7,73,310 of whom 5,36,243 or 69 3 per cent were Hindus, and 2,35,603 or 30 5 per cent were Mohammedans In 1870 71 it continued 5 Magisterial and Revenue courts Araria subdivision comprised of three police circles of Araria, Raniganj and Manihari Araria subdivision was formed on the 1st November, 1864 It comprised a total area of 1,045 square miles with 680 villages or townships In 1870-71 it contained one Magisterial and Revenue court Kishanganj subdivision was created on 17th December, 1845 The area of this subdivision was 1,310 square miles with 865 villages or townships There were 88,473 houses and the total population was 5,64,130 of whom 2,17,803 or 38 6 per cent were Hindus and 3,46 330 or 61 4 per cent were Mohammedans

The old *District Gazetteer of* Purnea by O'Malley (1911), mentioned that for administrative purposes the district was divided into three subdivisions, namely, Purnea Sadar, Araria, and Kishanganj.

The district now is divided into four subdivisions, namely, Purnea Sadar, Araria, Kishanganj and Katihar with an area of 4,885 square miles and there are 4,553 villages, five towns namely, Purnea, Katihar, Araria, Kishanganj and Forbesganj with a population of 25,25,231 persons respectively, according to the census of 1951. There are twenty eight *thanas* in the district

which have been mentioned subdivisionwise in Chapter 'Law, Order and Justice' of section 'Organisation of police force and Regular police'.

According to the Transfer of Territories Act, 1956, a specified area of Kishanganj subdivision was transferred to West Bengal, in which considerable portion of Katihar Munsifi and some portion of Kishanganj Munsifi have been transferred to West Bengal. The transfer has been discussed under Kishanganj in the Chapter "Places of Interest".

The general administration of the district is vested into the District Magistrate who for administrative purposes is under the control of the Commissioner of the Bhagalpur Division with headquarters at Bhagalpur. The District Magistrate receives orders both direct from the State Government at Patna and the Divisional Commissioner at Bhagalpur.

The District Magistrate is at the apex of the administrative structure, the base of which is being more and more broadened by the development of the country-side and the posting of Block Development Officers and extension of Village *Panchayats*. He has been given a large number of officers to help him in the administration of the district. For revenue purposes, he has an Additional Collector and for development purposes, he has the services of a District Development Officer who are posted at the headquarters, Purnea, and there are four Land Reforms Deputy Collectors posted at each of the subdivisions. At the subdivisional headquarters of each of the four subdivisions, there is a Subdivisional Magistrate in charge of Law and Order as well as revenue matters. The Subdivisional Officers are under the administrative control of the District Magistrate. There is a Superintendent of Police with headquarters at Purnea to maintain Law and Order. The Superintendent of Police is assisted by four Deputy Superintendents of Police posted at each of the subdivisional headquarters. The police structure of the administration has been described in Chapter 'Law, Order and Justice'.

The District Magistrate is also responsible for the execution of all planning schemes in the district and as the head of the District Planning Committee it is his duty to co-ordinate the function of all the nation building departments of the district. As the Chief Executive Officer of the district he is responsible for maintaining Law and Order and the smooth running of administration at the district level.

The separation of Judiciary from Executive has been introduced in the district of Purnea since 1957. The judicial powers of the district are now vested in the District and Sessions

Judge. A detailed account of the District Magistrate and his office has been given elsewhere.

The District Magistrate of Purnea had the following Gazetted Officers under him on the 31st January, 1961:—

(1) Additional Collector—1.
(2) District Development Officer—1.
(3) Deputy Magistrates and Deputy Collectors—3.
(4) Sub-Deputy Collector—1.
(5) District Welfare Officer—1.
(6) District Panchayat Officer—1.
(7) District Public Relations Officer—1.
(8) Land Acquisition Officer—1
(9) Additional Land Acquisition Officer—1.
(10) District Statistical Officer—1.
(11) District Industries Officer—1.
(12) District Accounts Officer—1
(13) District Agriculture Officer—1.
(14) Treasury Officer—1.
(15) Waste Land Reclamation Officer—
(16) Personal Assistant to Collector—1.
(17) District Rehabilitation Officer—1.
(18) Block Development Officers-*cum-Anchal Adhikaris*—38

The Sadar subdivision has the following officers:—

(1) Subdivisional Officer—1.
(2) Deputy Collector incharge Land Reforms and Development—1.
(3) Deputy Magistrate and Deputy Collector—1.
(4) Assitsant Engineer, N. E. S.—1.
(5)* Assistant Engineer, Irrigation—1.
(6) *Anchal Adhikaris* and Block Development Officers—11.

Araria subdivision has the following officers:—

(1) Subdivisional Officer—1.
(2) Sub-Deputy Magistrate—1.
(3) Land Revenue Deputy Collector—1.
(4) *Anchal Adhikaris* and Block Development Officers—9.

*Strictly Block Development Officers are not in the District Establishment.

Katihar subdivision has the following officers:—

(1) Subdivisional Officer—1.

(2) Deputy Magistrate—1.

(3) Sub-Deputy Magistrate—1.

(4) Land Revenue Deputy Collector—1.

(5) *Anchal Adhikaris* and Block Development Officers—11.

Kishanganj subdivision has the following officers:—

(1) Subdivisional Officer—1.

(2) Deputy Magistrate—1.

(3) Land Revenue Deputy Collector—1.

(4) *Anchal Adhikaris* and Block Development Officers—7.

THE DISTRICT MAGISTRATE AND HIS OFFICE.

From the very beginning of the British rule in India the District Magistrate was treated as the chief of the district administration. At first a promoted 'writer', later a covenanted hand and then a member of the Indian Civil Service or of the Provincial Civil Service, the District Magistrate was also the Collector. In the early years of British rule the District Magistrate controlled indigo plantation also. For a long time he was the Chairman of the District Board and looked after the roads, rural sanitation, health and education, etc.

With the growing needs of the administration many officers and special officers have been appointed for efficient administration. A gazetted Superintendent of Excise for Excise Department, a Superintendent of Police for running the police administration, a District Sub-Registrar for the registration of documents, a Superintendent of Jail for jail administration, a Civil Surgeon to run the medical department of the district were appointed to assist the District Magistrate . Besides, many gazetted officers in the rank of Magistrates were provided to run the administration. They were also revenue officers designated as Deputy•Collectors. These officers were given magisterial and revenue powers by the Government through notification in the official gazette.

Even high officials such as Superintendent of Police or the Subdivisional Officers in-charge of subdivisions were under the supervision of the District Magistrate who was responsible for the entire administration of the district. He was to see that the policy of the State Government was properly implemented. He had various duties to perform. He had to control communal

disturbances and preside over prize giving functions held in village schools situated at distant places from the district headquarters. Thus the multifarious activities of the District Magistrate went on increasing but the pattern of the collectorate remained the same as before when the work of the office was much less.

Another duty of the District Magistrate was to hear criminal cases and to decide them. Usually the District Magistrate at one time heard the appeals from the 2nd and 3rd Class Magistrates and the revenue appeals. He also tried some important original cases, both criminal and revenue.

With the development of public opinion the District Boards were made independent bodies but the District Magistrate had still certain responsibilities to see that the Board was functioning properly. Many of the District Officers' departments at Secretariat level and the local officers at district level for that department were put under his departmental boss as well. Thus an Excise Superintendent had to work under the District Magistrate directly but he was also put under the Deputy Commissioner of Excise at the Division and the Commissioner of Excise at Government headquarters But that does not absolve the District Magistrate from his overall control of these departments

After independence was achieved in 1947, the character of the administration has been undergoing a great change Briefly, the State has assumed the role of a Welfare State More and more development work and projects were introduced. More agrarian reforms came in adding to the work of the District Magistrate. The District Magistrates' functions as the Collector went on rapidly multiplying A large number of District Councils for education, sanitation, small savings drive, irrigation, etc, came to be formed. The District Magistrate was invariably the head of all these District Councils

Every district is divided into several units known as the subdivision. The Subdivisional Officer is the executive head of the subdivision and holds in him the same type of function and responsibilities as a District Magistrate but under the administrative control of the District Magistrate The Subdivisional Magistrate is also a Deputy to the Collector in revenue matters. Thus the District Magistrate and Collector is at the administrative head of the district with his Deputies firstly a number of joint Magistrates, Assistant Magistrates, Deputy Magistrates and Deputy Collectors at the district headquarters and secondly the Subdivisional Officers and a number of officers at the subdivisions combining the magisterial and revenue work

and he had the further assistance of officers in charge of specialised departments like Excise, Registration, Medical and Public Health, etc., at headquarters with their subordinates at the lower level. With the dwindling of the European members of the Indian Civil Service in 1947 by their wholesale retirement by the Government, there was a vacuum in the rank of the top and experienced officers. The vacuum was sought to be filled up by the creation of a service known as the Indian Administrative Service. This service was filled up by promotion from the Provincial Civil Service and recruitment from the market by selection and open competitive examination. There were also emergency recruitments by interview only.

As mentioned before the office of the District Magistrate known as the Collectorate had continued the same type of pattern from almost the beginning of the district administration under British rule. A detailed study of the district and subdivisional offices which included the recommendations regarding the standard of staffing and the organisation to be adopted for the Collectorate and subdivisional offices was done in 1905 by a committee known as the Slacke Committee This committee was set up to draw a comprehensive scheme for improving the position of the. ministerial officers. The pattern that was set up followed the needs at that time. The English Office in the Collectorate was the Clearing House of the District Magistrates, administration and every letter went to the English Office and had to be treated in the various departments concerned but under the control of the English Office. Apart from departments the Office Superintendent was at the head of the ministerial officers. Each of the departments in the Collectorate like English Office, Establishment, Nazarat, Tauji and Cess, Land Registration, Treasury was put under a Deputy Collector or an Assistant Magistrate or a Joint Magistrate who belonged to the Indian Civil Service. The Establishment was technically under a Deputy Collector and under him the head of the ministerial establishment, namely, the Office Superintendent ran this section. The position of the Office Superintendent depends much on his personality and the impression he had created on the District Magistrate. For too often he acted as the hidden fifth wheel of the coach and the Deputy Magistrate in charge of the Establishment left matters to the Office Superintendent for more than one reason and the ministerial officers were absolutely left under the control of the Office Superintendent.

With the emergency of the work of the Second Great War various price control measures had to be enforced. Cloth,

kerosene oil, sugar, medicines, consumers' goods, and various other more necessary commodities had to be controlled. The Deputy Magistrates had to take up the role of a trader, a shop-keeper, and a godown superintendent. They did not have the training for all this work. Overnight a Sub-Deputy Magistrate with a small pay of Rs. 200 per month found himself changed into a Price Control Officer or a District Supply Officer controlling transactions of lakhs of rupees. The original strength of the ministerial officers could not cope with the great pressure of work and quickly large temporary recruitments had to be made. The temporary recruits knew very well that their establishment might not last for a long time. They had very big temptation before them and it is no wonder that a certain incidence of corruption and demoralisation of the administrative machinery had crept in. This was not peculiar to this district alone but it was all over in State and probably over all the States in India. It was very difficult for the District Magistrate to control the vast organisation.

Many of the temporary departments that had been created because of circumstances brought in by the Second Great War closed down at the proper time. Some of them like Supply Department had to be continued in some shape or other and has received fillips occasionally. New problems were created with the partition of the country and the creation of Pakistan. A number of Muslims from Purnea district for various reasons had migrated to Pakistan. There was a panic among both the communities for some months following the communal outburst in 1946. This tension received its peak after the partition which encouraged the Muslims to migrate.

As has been mentioned before development work has been given a great emphasis in the present set up of administration of the Welfare State. The rigours of casteism are sought to be removed both by statute and by propaganda. Laws have been passed removing the disqualification of the Harijans from entering temples. Wide facilities have been given to the backward communities and scheduled castes for education. A large number of welfare schemes have been taken up for the backward communities and scheduled castes and the aboriginals. National Extension Service Blocks and Community Projects have been started in various corners of the district. The idea is to upgrade a chain of villages under a particular project or a block so that by process of osmosis the other areas will also upgrade themselves. The abolition of *zamindari* had thrown the society into a whirlpool which has not yet subsided. The administrative set up has

had to change very considerably because of the abolition of *zamindari*. There is no intermediary link now between the State and the cultivators. The landless labourers have been thought of in the present over all schemes for the improvement of the country. All these changes at the district level were to be controlled from the Collectorate and had taxed to the utmost the set up of the Collectorate, the office of the District Officer with its own old pattern. It was felt that this pattren must go. For this reason the State Government had deputed a senior I. C. S. officer, Shri B. D. Pande, who studied the problems of the reorganisation of the districts and subdivisional offices and gave his scheme. This scheme was implemented by the Government in July, 1958. By this order the set up of the district offices has been completely changed to suit the new condition.

Shri B. D. Pande, I.C.S., took into account the existing circumstances which covered the separation of the Judiciary and the Executive, the development programmes and the consequent changes towards a welfare administration and the staff that had been recruited on *ad hoc* basis, the lack of method of working, supervision or inspection. It was felt that the Collectorate was not organised into properly defined units with a proper structure which was essential for efficient office organisation Ill assorted arrangement at the top was bound to affect the ramifications and the actual working of the schemes.

The number of clerical staff had gone up by more than four times as compared with the number of clerical staff in 1904 and had gone to nearabout 600 persons. Along with the number of the field staff that are working under the Collectorate, namely, *Karmacharis*, Village Level Workers, *Gram Sewaks*, Inspectorates, etc., the number would go up to as large as 2,000. This huge array of assistants itself is an administrative and organisational problem.

Sri Pande found that most of the correspondence was carried out in the main office of the Collectorate known as English Office which was itself a misnomer. The English Office formerly had two main divisions, Judicial and Revenue while a number of revenue subjects were still dealt with in the English Office. There was a fairly big separate revenue establishment, consequent on the abolition of *zamindari*. Correspondence was also carried on in a large number of smaller offices. This led to duplication of files and papers, loss of papers, lack of supervision, etc. He felt that the best arrangement for the organisation of the main

Collectorate office was to divide the Collectorate into seven principal sections as follows:—

(1) Confidential—This was to be directly under the Collectorate.

(2) General Office—This was to replace the English Office.

(3) Revenue Office—This was to correspond to the present Revenue Office set up on the abolition of *zamindaris*.

(4) Development Office.

(5) Establishment Office.

(6) Legal Section.

(7) Treasury and Accounts.

The proposed distribution of subjects was as follows:—

Section I—Confidential.

Section II—General—

(1) Law and Order; (2) Agrarian disputes; (3) Maintenance of Public Order Act; (4) Collective fines; (5) Police and Homeguards; (6) Requisitioning and de-requisitioning of property; (7) Allotment of houses; (8) Soldiers'-Sailors' and Air-men's Board; (9) Elections; (10) Census; (11) Cinemas and dramatic performances; (12) Licenses (Arm, Explosives, etc.); (13) Press, including examination of newspaper cuttings; (14) Public Relations; (15) Relief and Rehabilitation of displaced persons from Pakistan; (16) Evacuee Property Act; (17) Passports and Visas; (18) Domicile certificate; (19) Political sufferers; (20) Jails; (21) Supply and Price Control; (22) Anti-corruption; (23) Assembly, Council and Parliament questions; (24) Local Bodies, that is, Municipalities, District Boards, Notified Area Committees and other Union Committees; (25) Library; (26) Forms and Stationery; (27) Labour, including Minimum Wages Act, Workmen's compensation, etc.

Section III—Revenue—

(1) Land Reform; (2) Tenancy Act; (3) Rent and Cess; (4) Khas Mahal; (5) Rent Commutation; (6) Chaukidari; (7) Settlement; (8) Balabandi, (9) Malkhana; (10) Registration; (11) Chakrana; (12) Embankment; (13) Excise and

Opium; (14) Kanungo Establishment; (15) Taxation Measures; (16) Record Room; (17) Copying Department; (18) Certificate; (19) Nazarat; (20) Circuit House; (21) Land Acquisition; (22) Ferries; (23) Mining; (24) Treasure Trove; (25) Stamps; (26) Crop and Weather reports; (27) Flood and Scarcity.

Section IV—Development—

(1) Five-Year Plan and Co-ordination; (2) District Development Committee; (3) District Planning Committee; (4) District Education Committee; (5) Community Project and National Extension Service; (6) Local Development Works Programme; (7) Irrigation (Major, medium and minor); (8) Reclamation of Waste land; (9) Welfare of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes; (10) Gram Panchayats; (11) Vested Zamindari Improvement works; (12) Welfare activities of other departments including Grow More Food, (13) Statistics; (14) Forests; (15) Loans, including agriculturists' loans, land improvement loans, loans under the State Aid to Industries Act, etc ; (16) National Savings scheme; (17) Works staff in the District.

Section V—Establishment—

(1) Personal cases—maintenance of Service Books, Character rolls, leave accounts, etc., of personnel employed under the Collector; (2) Appointments, postings and transfers; (3) Leave; (4) Departmental proceedings; (5) Provident Fund Gratuity; (6) Pensions; (7) Security; (8) Bill and Budget works of the Collectorate.

Section VI—Legal Section—

(1) Revenue and Judicial Munshikhana; (2) Civil Suits, Pauper suits; (3) Criminal motions; (4) Inspection of Trial Registers; (5) Appeals; (6) Correspondence with the Legal Remembrancer; (7) High Court; (8) Release of Prisoners; (9) Pleaders, Mukhtears and Revenue Agents; (10) Probate; (11) Wakf Estates—Religious Endowments; (12) Payment of Pleader's bills; (13) Judicial Accounts; (14) Criminal fines; (15) Law Agents and Law Clerks; (16) Other

Criminal, Civil or Revenue Appeals or Motions—and matters connected therewith; (17) Court Malkhana.

Section VII—Treasury and Accounts—

(1) Treasury and Accounts; (2) Sale of Stamps.

Sri Pande made a detailed recommendation for the offices indicating the scales of pay under the different heads. He had further recommended for the removal of the artifical distinction between Class A and Class B districts. At the time of the Slacke Committee's Report a distinction was made between the districts mainly on the basis of the number of assistants employed under a Collectorate. Where the number of clerks was below 100 the district was placed in a lower category in respect of the pay of the supervisory staff. The number of clerks in every district was well above 100 when Sri Pande made his enquiry and he felt that the ministerial officers employed in the different districts should have equal opportunity of promotion to a higher post. Therefore he recommended that the distinction between the different districts in matter of salaries to be drawn by persons doing the same kind of jobs should be abolished.

There was a certain amount of invidious distinction between a Sadar subdivision and a Mofussil subdivision. The recommendation was that the Sadar subdivision should be organised more or less on the lines of Mofussil subdivisions. The Sadar Subdivisional Officer was to have the following departments:—

General office, Elections· Development; Confidential; Loans and Relief: N. E. S. and *Gram Panchayats*, Supply and Price Control; Minor Irrigation, Public Relations, Welfare; Chaukidari: Nazarat; Certificates: B. T. Act cases; Library; Land Reforms—L. I. Fee—Revenue Munshikhana; Arms and Cinemas and other licenses.

According to Shri Pande the Collectorate should also retain Probate, Civil Suits, Malkhana, Mines, Revenue Appeals, Settlement, Embankment, Balabandi, and Land Acquisition Sections. Another important change that had to be taken cognizance of was that with the abolition of *zamindari* and the vesting of the *zamindari* into the State, the Khasmahal Department of a district had lost its separate entity. The Khasmahal was, therefore, to be completely merged with the Land Reforms Department. The Landlord Fee Department of the Collectorate had to be abolished as with the abolition of the *zamindari*, no money-orders had to be

sent or acknowledged. It was recommended that arrangements should be made with the District Registration Office or the Sub-Registrar to deposit the Landlord Fee direct into the Treasury and send notices to the Circle Officers or the *Anchal Adhikaris* concerned.

Shri Pande went into some detail as to the necessary augmentation of certain departments like Nazarat, Certificate, Record Rooms, etc. He considered that since the *Anchal Adhikari* was also the Block Development Officer, the certificate powers should not be vested in him and the procedure of getting certificates executed through the Subdivisional Officer should continue. It may be noted here that the work in connection with certificates has been transferred to the *Anchal* Officers in the other Raiyarwari States of Bombay, Madras, Uttar Pradesh, etc.

Shri Pande had also given elaborate suggestions for the working of the Development Office, Welfare Departments, *Gram Panchayats,* Loans Department, Establishment Office, Legal Office, Inspection, etc. He had recommended that questionnaires to assist in the inspection as in the case of some of the older manuals should be prescribed for the new branches also like those of development, revenue, etc. They will be of valuable guidance to junior officers.

Shri Pande also felt that there should be adequate delegation of powers to officers at all levels, namely, *Anchal Adhikaris,* Subdivisional Officers, Collectors, etc. He had also indicated the necessity of a regular training of the newly recruited assistants and that the training should be closely integrated with practical training in the office itself.

The Chief Secretary in his no. OM/R-302/56—10443, dated the 20th December, 1957, had approved of the suggestions and informed the District Officers by name that the arrangements should be made forthwith to introduce the Reorganisation Scheme in the districts and subdivisions from the 2nd January, 1958. He reiterated that the Collectorate should be divided into seven principal sections as recommended by Shri B. D. Pande. He further expected that the Sadar Subdivisional Officers should function separately from the Collectorate like Mofussil Subdivisional Officer with the departments as recommended by Shri Pande and the Collectorate should, however, retain the nine subjects mentioned before as per Shri Pande's recommendations. There was a further reiteration of Shri Pande's scheme in the letter of Shri M. S. Rao, I.C.S., Chief Secretary, bearing no. R2-302/56-CSR—365, dated the 9th July, 1958. In this

letter the existing distinction between A and B Class districts in respect of pay-scale for various categories of the posts was abolished. Orders were passed for the merging of the Khasmahal Office in the General Land Reforms Office, the abolition of L. I. Fee Department and other recommendations regarding Nazarat, Certificate, Establishment, Legal Section, etc.

COMMERCIAL TAXES DEPARTMENT.

The Purnea circle of the Commercial Taxes Department was created in 1944 with its headquarters at Purnea. The Superintendent of Commercial Taxes is the administrative head of the circle, and works under the Commissioner of Commercial Taxes posted at Patna. In 1949 a sub-circle was created at Kishanganj and is administered by an Assistant Superintendent of Commercial Taxes.

This department is concerned with the assessment and realisation of the following taxes:—

(*i*) Agricultural Income-tax, (*ii*) Sales tax, (*iii*) Entertainment Tax, (*iv*) Electricity duty, (*v*) Tax on sale of Motor Spirit, (*vi*) Transport tax and (*vii*) Central sales tax.

The accompanying chart shows the collection yearwise under the different heads.

T e Statistics of Commercial Taxes under Receipts and Expenditure are given below :—

Receipts.

Year.	A. I. T.	Sales Tax.	Entertainment.	Motor Spirit.	Elect. Duty.	P. G. T.	C. S. T.	Total.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1944-45	1,35,491·00	1,89,380·00	..	..	..	..	..	3,24,871·00
1945-46	1,56,649·00	3,54,505·00	..	..	..	..	..	5,11,154·00
1946-47	1,78,601·00	4,73,727·00	..	..	..	..	..	6,52,328·00
1947-48	2,45,637·00	4,05,822·00	..	..	..	..	..	6,51,459·00
1948-49	2,82,473·00	11,69,464·00	1,83,904·00	16,202·00	..	..	..	16,52,043·00
1949-50	3,94,910·00	19,98,264·00	2.36,056·00	14,010·00	6,527·00	..	..	26,59,757·00
1950-51	5,06,038·00	26,94,022·00	2,48,350·00	42,494·00	4,393·00	14,771·00	..	35,10,068·00
1951-52	5,28,659·00	25,72,292·00	2,85,062·00	58,160·00	11,186·00	64,132·00	..	35,19,491·00
1952-53	5,05,904·00	21,73,777·00	2,71,338·00	1,06,723·00	8,490·00	70,999·00	..	31,37,231·00
1953-54	2,88,291·00	18,22,956·00	2,63,485·00	1,02,820·00	4,992·00	50,173·00	..	25,33,717·00
1954-55	3,56,548·00	15,70,331·00	2,30,744·00	1,13,743·00	8,257·00	49,120·00	..	23,28,743·00
1955-56	3,19,111·00	16,80,434·00	2,64,595·00	1,17,957·00	9,200·00	37,234·00	..	24,28,531·00
1956-57	9,56,619·00	19,37,096·00	3,24,370·00	1,62,961·00	9,884·00	31,423·00	..	34,22,352·00
1957-58	82,032·00	20,66,855·00	3,15,823·00	1,83,513·00	22,940·00	35,398·00	71,418.00	27,77,979·00
1958-59	92,691·00	20,27,899·00	3,19,715·00	2,66,075·00	28,313.00	48,528·00	1,76,775·00	29,60,196·00
1959-60	1,26,615·46	17,33,475·26	3,68,971·61	2,96,780·97	30,027·80	78,136·51	1,33,659·98	27,67,667·59

Expenditure.

Year.	Pay of officers.	Cost of Establishment.	Travelling Allowance.	Cost of living allowance.	Contingencies.
1	2	3	4	5	6
	Rs. nP.	Rs. nP.	Rs. nP.	Rs. nP.	Rs nP.
1956-57	14,607·13	29,684·03	8,920·00	16,534·03	8,375·10
1957-58	9,253·15	21,786·10	5,806·07	12,209·27	3,596·78
1958-59	12,616·82	24,262·88	4,999·93	14,481·06	6,216 08
1959-60	13,461·75	25,259·39	8,812·18	15,372·21	5,432·10

Registration Office.

The District Sub-Registrar is the administrative head of the Registration Department under the immediate control of the District Magistrate. The Inspector-General of Registration, Patna is the head of the Department. There are eight Sub-Registry Offices in the district. Each Sub-Registry Office is under the charge of a Sub-Registrar.

The District Sub-Registrar assists the District Magistrate in supervising the work of the Sub-Registry Offices in the district. The District Sub-Registrar's Office at the headquarters of the district has got a big record room containing 22,946 registers and indexes of all Sub-Registry Offices situated in the district. These registers and books contain copies of documents registered since 1796 A. D. Strict secrecy with regard to the contents of documents copied in the register books is maintained as in doing so it yields good income to the Government in the shape of searching and copying fees.

The statistics below would show the number of documents registered, receipts and expenditure of the district from 1950 to 1959:—

Year.	Documents registered.	Receipts.	Expenditure.
		Rs.	Rs.
1950	44,945	3,28,272	89,552
1951	49,276	3,59,882	97,048
1952	46,729	3,41,166	90,469
1953	47,685	3,40,147	92,513

Year.	Documents registered.	Receipts.	Expenditure.
		Rs.	Rs.
1954	47,415	3,39,557	96,104
1955	39,610	2,64,754	91,366
1956	44,600	2,95,617	91,209
1957	48,166	3,13,649	90,500
1958	59,349	2,97,636	1,01,566
1959	68,357	4,28,977	1,07,908

The average number of documents registered annually during the five years that is from 1950 to 1954 was 47,210 and the number of documents registered in 1954 was 47,415 as against 68,357 in 1959. The average number of documents registered annually during the six years that is from 1954 to 1959 was 51,210 or in the course of one decade the registration has increased by 52 per cent.

STAMPS.

There is one Treasury Officer of Finance Service at the District Treasury Office. Besides there is one Sub-Treasury Officer each at Kishanganj and Araria. These officers are under the direct control of the Collector. The Subdivisional Officers of Mofussil subdivisions are the head of Sub-Treasury Offices.

The revenue from the sale of stamps is an important source of income to the State Government.

The statistics of receipts from sale of stamps from 1955 to 1960 are given below:—

Receipts.

	Rs.
1954-55	13,90,635
1955-56	13,43,199
1956-57	16,03,957
1957-58	14,26,144
1958-59	16,80,626
1959-60	18,46,279

There was decrease of Rs. 47,436 in 1955-56 against the year 1954-55 due to decrease in number of general cases and sale of lands, etc.

The gross receipts under Stamps and Court Fee Act for the year 1956-57 amounted to Rs. 16,03,957 against Rs. 13,43,199 of the preceding year. There has been increase of Rs. 2,60,758 only due to increase in consumption of the Survey Department. The gross receipts under Stamps and Court Fee Act for the year 1957-58 was Rs. 14,26,144 against Rs. 16,03,957 of the preceding year. There has been decrease of Rs. 1,77,813 due to the decrease in number of general cases and sale of lands, etc.

The gross receipts under Stamps and Court Fee Act for the year 1958-59 was Rs. 16,80,626 against Rs. 14,26,144 of the preceding year. There has been increase of Rs. 2,54,482 due to dicrease in consumption in survey operation, greater number of motor vehicle services, sale of lands and due to introduction of the new decimal coinage system.

The gross receipts for the year 1959-60 amounted to Rs. 18,46,279 against Rs. 16,80,626 of the preceding year. There has been increase of Rs. 1,65,653 due to increase of motor vehicles services, sale of lands and introduction of new decimal coinage.

Public Relations Department.

The Public Relations Department was established in Purnea district in 1952 under the First Five-Year Plan. There is a District Public Relations Officer who is under the immediate control of the District Magistrate. The District Relations Officer is assisted by an Assistant Public Relations Officer. These Officers have to make the people aware of the development works that have been or are being carried out in the district and to induce them to co-operate with government and the department concerned to make the development schemes successful.

Besides this main function of the Public Relations Department, it also helps in the cultural uplift of the people by music and drama exhibitions, etc.

In order to carry out these functions the department besides maintaining a publicity van distributes radio sets and maintains a reading room in which the people come to read newspapers periodicals and government bulletins. The department has issued 214 radio sets to villages and subscribes five English newspapers and two Hindi newspapers.

Public Health Engineering.

A Public Health Engineering Division with headquarters at Purnea was created in 1955. The main object was to afford proper facilities of drinking water to the people of Purnea.

Saharsa district for this purpose was also placed under the same division. An Executive Engineer is the head of the Division and is under the administrative control of the Superintending Engineer with his headquarters at Muzaffarpur. The headquarters of the Chief Engineer is at Patna.

This Division comprises three subdivisions in Purnea district, namely, Purnea, Katihar and Kishanganj and one subdivision in Saharsa district with headquarters at Saharsa. Since the creation of the Division the following important schemes have been taken up:—

(1) Kishanganj Water-supply Scheme,

(2) Purnea Water-supply Scheme,

(3) Katihar Water-supply Scheme, and

(4) Forbesganj Water-supply Scheme.

Central Excise Department.

With the introduction of Excise duty on tobacco during the year 1943, Purnea was made a sub-circle under the administrative jurisdiction of Bhagalpur Circle. Now Purnea is divided into three circles, namely, Purnea I, Purnea II and Kishanganj Each circle is under the administrative charge of a Superintendent of Central Excise. They are assisted by a Deputy Superintendent each. These circles are under the direct control of an Assistant Collector of Bhagalpur Division. The following circles namely, Bhagalpur, Monghyr, Purnea I, Purnea II, Kishanganj and Samastipur are under the jurisdiction of Assistant Collector of Central Excise, Bhagalpur. The Assistant Collector is under the control of the Collector of Central Excise with headquarters at Patna.

For the purpose of prevention of smuggling two preventive Inspectors are posted in each circle and they are under the direct control of the Superintendent of Central Excise.

The main function of the Superintendents is to look after the proper collection of Excise duty levied by the Central Government from time to time.

The following table will show the collection of Revenue from Central Excise in Purnea district:—

	1957-58.	1958-59.	1959-60.
	Tobacco.		
Purnea Circle I—			
1. Number of growing villages	791	740	587
2. Number of growers ..	8,410	12,660	9,412
3. Production ..	lbs. 30,61,272	lbs. 43,86,294	lbs. 32,03,952
4. Potential Revenue ..	Rs. 14,50,000	Rs. 18,38,000	Rs. 15,28,537
5. Actual Revenue realised ..	Rs. 1,74,659	Rs. 1,32,186	Rs. 63,385

	1957-58.	1958-59.	1959-60
Purnea Circle II—			
1. Number of growing villages	356	355	342 (September to August).
2. Number of growers ..	4,470	7,245	6,062
3. Production	lbs. 29,74,510	lbs 45,42,073	lbs. 45,94,211
4. Potential Revenue	Rs. 14,87,255	Rs. 22,71,036	Rs. 22,97,106 (April to March).
5. Actual revenue realised	Rs. 4,65,846	Rs. 3,59,895	Rs. 4,39,068

Vegetable Non-essential Oil.

Purnea I—			
1. Number of V. N. E. Oil Mills ..	..	35	35
2. Production	..	.. Tons 1,581.214	Tons. 1,983.106
3. Revenue realised	..	.. Rs. 1,07,518	Rs. 1,93,436
Purnea II—			
No. of V. N. E. Oil Mills	..	.. 9	10 (April to March).
Production	..	.. Tons 152	Tons 303
Revenue realised	..	.. Rs. 16,063	Rs. 28,601

EXCISE DEPARTMENT.

There is a Superintendent for this department at the head of the administration at the district level. He is under the immediate control of the District Magistrate. The Superintendent of Excise is also under the administrative control of the Deputy Commissioner of Excise, Northern Range with his headquarters at Muzaffarpur and the Commissioner of Excise, Bihar with his headquarters at Patna.

The district has been divided into three ranges each under the charge of one Inspector with headquarters at Purnea, Araria and Kishanganj. These ranges have further been subdivided into nine circles, each under the charge of one Sub-Inspector.

Country Spirits.

The out-still system of liquor was in vogue till the year 1908-09. From the year 1909-10, the supply of liquor is being made from the distillery. The settlement of country spirit shop was made by auction till the year 1922-23. In 1923-24 auction system was replaced by the sliding scale system. Since the year 1932-33 the auction system was re-introduced. But again from 1950-51 the sliding scale system has been re-introduced and is still

in practice. Under this system liquor warehouses were established in all subdivisional headquarters to store, blend, reduce and issue liquor to the shops in their jurisdiction. The revenue figures of the year 1952-53 was the peak year for country spirit due to high price of jute prevailing in the district.

Ganja.

The revenue from *ganja* is levied from duty and license fees. The sliding scale system was re-introduced from the year 1950-51. There were 108 *ganja* shops in the district in the year 1931-32. This was gradually increased to 126 shops according to the exigency of the demand of the local people. This number continued till 31st October 1956, when consequent on the transfer of a part of the district to the State of West Bengal 16 *ganja* shops which fell into the transferred area, were transferred to that State from 1st November 1956. So now only 110 *ganja* shops are in this district. The district is situated on the Nepal border where there is no restriction on the cultivation, possession and sale of *ganja*. So it is available at a very cheap rate. Hence *ganja* smuggling is carried on in a large scale to the State of West Bengal and other places through this district. Hence special centres have been created on the Nepal borders as well as at Ghurna and Katihar in this district. These are meant for check.

Bhang.

Bhang plants grow in the rural areas of this district. The leaves are used as the basis of intoxication. The revenue from *bhang* is derived from license fees and duty. The consumption of *bhang* from the license shop is nominal in the district.

Foreign Liquor.

The consumption of foreign liquor is confined only to the richer class of the people and does not hamper the sale of country spirit.

Pachwai.

Pachwai is a beverage made out of fermented rice. The consumption of *Pachwai* in the district is confined mostly to the aboriginal classes of people. The license for home brewing of *Pachwai* per annum per household is given at the rate of Rs. 2 to the aboriginals.

The greater portion of the Excise revenue is derived from the taxes levied on country spirit, *ganja, toddy* and miscellaneous including denatured spirit. The statistics of revenue derived from different kinds of excisable commodities from 1952-53 to 1959-60 are given below:—

—	1952-53.	1953-54.	1954-55.	1955-56.	1956-57.	1957-58.	1958-59.	1959-60.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1. Country spirit ..	16,05,510	12,35,834	11,50,397	12,07,064	12,77,745	10,18,674	10,30,030	11,07,928
2. *Ganja* ...	1,85,570	1,33,856	1,58,814	1,94,770	2,52,379	1,52,769	1,32,833	1,32,821
3. *Bhang* ..	2,275	2,429	2,559	1,992	2,832	2,118	1,983	2,091
4. Opium ..	2,31,984	2,25,498	2,13,041	1,94,733	1,75,681	91,147	63,164	8,071
5. Toddy ..	94,450	1,08,598	1,12,474	1,17,996	1,13,382	1,08,508	1,18,958	1,10,742
6. Foreign liquor ..	17,005	13,594	12,918	17,980	19,171	22,745	17,102	21,676
7. *Pachwai* ...	1,862	1,774	1,386	1,744	974	608	524	712
8. Miscellaneous including denatured spirit, etc. ...	28,528	31,299	25,304	7,617	25,215	20,795	26,290	23,736
Total ...	21,87,484	17,52,882	16,76,893	17,59,589	18,66,387	14,17,364	13,90,360	14,07,777

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT.

The District Ariculture Officer, Purnea, is the administrative head of the department. He is under the administrative control of the Deputy Director of Agriculture, Kosi range whose headquarters is at Saharsa. The Director of Agriculture is the administrative head of the Agricultural Department at the State level. This department is functioning in Purnea district since 1943.

There are four Subdivisional Agricultural Officers, one at each of the four subdivisions of the district. They are under the administrative control of the District Agriculture Officer.

The District Agriculture Officer is assisted by a team of subject matter Specialists in Agronomy, Botany, Chemistry, Mechanics, Engineering, Marketing, Plant Protection, Jute, Horticulture, Well-boring and Fishery. Their job is to co-ordinate the result of research from laboratories to the farmers in the fields and to train the Village Level Workers and Agricultural Extension Supervisors in different blocks on latest findings of research for disseminating them.

The Subdivisional Agriculture Officer is also assisted by a team of Specialists in Fishery, Horticulture, Plant Protection, Engineering and Agricultural Inspectors. They control the activities of Agricultural Extension Supervisors working in 29 blocks of the district. There are fifteen Agricultural Inspectors working outside the blocks and they are assisted by a *Kamdar* each in their day-to-day work. Recently a section of the Cane Development Scheme has been sanctioned by the Government for Purnea district for executing development schemes relating to cane around the proposed co-operative sugar factory at Banmankhi. There are twenty *Kamdars* working under this scheme at Dhamdaha, Banmankhi and Forbesganj.

The agricultural programme is executed through the Agricultural Extension Supervisors and Village Level Workers posted in 29 blocks and through Agricultural Inspectors and *Kamdars* outside blocks.

Demonstrations are frequently held in the block area. The cultivators adopt the improved methods of cultivation advocated by the department under the supervision of the District Agriculture Officer. Field demonstrations of standing crops are held during every season. The actual demonstration of improved method of cultivation is exhibited in every famous *mela* of the district.

For development of jute cultivation, there is one Jute Inspector posted under the District Agricultural Officer and nineteen jute field assistants working in various blocks.

The District Agriculture Farm is situated at Khuskibag and has an area of 99.67 acres, where experiments and trials are done. There are three subdivisional agricultural farms of 50 acres each, situated at subdivisional headquarters. Different types of trials are conducted at these farms.

Income-tax Department.

Administration of income-tax is a Central subject and is administered by the Central Government. The jurisdiction of the Income-tax Officer, Purnea extends over the whole of Purnea and Saharsa districts. There are two Income-tax Officers posted at Purnea. One is known as Income-tax Officer Ward 'A' and the other is known as Income-tax Officer, Ward 'B'. The former assesses only such cases that might have been assessed for Rs. 10,000 or above and the latter assesses the case falling under the income-group below Rs. 10,000. There are two sanctioned posts of the Income-tax Inspectors in the district to assist the officers in their work.

The controlling officer of the Income-tax Officers at Purnea is the Inspecting Assistant Commissioner of Income-tax, Northern Range with his headquarters at Patna.

He in his turn, is under the Commissioner of Income-tax, with his headquarters at Patna whose jurisdiction extends over the whole of Bihar and Orissa.

For wealth tax purposes, in which the income-tax is also included, the Income-tax Officer, Muzaffarpur Circle with his headquarters at Muzaffarpur is the authority. He is also controlled by the Commissioner of Income-tax, Patna.

For estate duty cases including the income-tax, the Assistant Controller of Estate Duty-*cum*-Income-tax with his headquarters at Patna is the authority. He is under the administrative control of the Deputy Controller of Estate Duty, Calcutta Range, with his headquarters at Patna.

With regard to appeals all the cases from the Income-tax Officers of Purnea lie with his appellate Assistant Commissioner of Income-tax with his headquarters at Muzaffarpur. He comes to the district headquarters to hear appeals.

The figures of assessment and collection of income-tax along with the number of assessees are given below for two years:—

Year.	No. of assessees.	Net demand.	Net collection.
		Rs.	Rs.
1958-59	1,638	15,52,000	7,33,509
1959-60	2,484	16,02,000	7,18,000

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

(*Roads and Buildings.*)

Prior to 1947 there was only one Subdivisional Officer of Public Works Department at Purnea, i.e., Purnea subdivision which was under the Bhagalpur Division (Roads and Buildings). But, on 11th October 1947 the Purnea Division of the Public Works Department was created. The Division is under the charge of an Executive Engineer with his headquarters at Purnea. He is the administrative head at the district level. He has to supervise the execution of the scheme, look after the work of the S. D. O. and to control the expenditure and give payment to the contractors. He is under the administrative control of the Superintending Engineer who has his headquarters at Bhagalpur. The Chief Engineer, Bihar, with headquarters at Patna is the technical and administrative head of the department.

The Purnea Division constitutes five subdivisions namely, Purnea subdivision at Purnea, Katihar subdivision at Katihar, Araria subdivision at Araria, Ganga-Darjeeling Road subdivision at Purnea and Kishanganj subdivision at Kishanganj with one Subdivisional Officer (Assistant Engineer) in respect of each subdivision. These Assistant Engineers are known as Subdivisional Officers, P. W. D. There are 12 Sectional Officers in the Purnea Division to supervise the execution of works under the guidance of the Subdivisional Officers.

The Executive Engineer has to see that proper measures are taken to maintain the public buildings and roads in his Division and to prevent encroachment on Government lands in his charge.

The Executive Engineer inspects the work and management of the Subdivisional Officers. The Subdivisional Officers and Overseers are responsible for the management and execution of works within their respective jurisdictions.

Prior to the First Five-Year Plan, there was hardly any well-surfaced P. W. D. road in the Purnea district. A few roads are

taken over under the post-war development scheme and improvement work started in 1949 which gained momentum when the First Five-Year Plan was started in 1951. At the end of the First Five-Year Plan, 226 miles of road were under the Public Works Department out of which 196 miles were surfaced during the Plan period. The Second Five-Year Plan provides for taking over 150 miles of new roads and completing the roads taken over under the First Five-Year Plan.

Mahananda bridge at Dengraha ghat shall be constructed by the close of the Second Five-Year Plan. The total expenditure will be more than 60 lakhs of rupees.

Education Department.

The Education Department at the district level is controlled by the District Education Officer with his headquarters at Purnea. The Regional Director of Education with his headquarters at Bhagalpur is the immediate superior of the District Education Officer. The Director of Public Instruction with his headquarters at Patna, is the head of the department at the State level. At the district level the District Education Officer is assisted by a number of officers in running his department efficiently.

Each subdivision is placed in charge of a Subdivisional Education Officer with the headquarters at each of the civil subdivisional headquarters.

At the district level the District Education Officer is helped by the District Superintendent of Education, District Social Education Organiser, District Inspectress of Schools, Deputy Superintendent of Education and Deputy Superintendent of Basic Education and Physical Education with their headquarters at Purnea.

There are four Deputy Inspectors of Schools at each of the subdivisional headquarters. Below the Deputy Inspector of Schools there are 50 Sub-Inspectors of Schools in the whole district, each of them is responsible for the Educational activities in his respective circle. There are two Deputy Inspectresses of Schools in the district, one at Katihar and another at Araria to help the District Inspectress of Schools in her activities regarding girls education in the district.

Co-operative Department.

There are four circles, namely, Purnea, Araria, Kishanganj and Katihar each under an Assistant Registrar of the Co-operative Societies. The Deputy Registrar of Bhagalpur Division with his

headquarters at Bhagalpur controls the work of the Assistant Registrars of all the circles. The Registrar, Co-operative Societies, Bihar, with his headquarters at Patna is the administrative head of the Co-operative Department.

There is one Co-operative Inspector and one Local Auditor posted by the Co-operative Department in each Community Development Block. The main aim of the Co-operative Department is to look after the proper functioning of the Co-operative Societies.

There is one District Central Co-operative Bank registered under the name and style of the Purnea District Central Co-operative Bank with its branch offices at Araria and Kishanganj. One General Manger has been posted by the Government in the District Central Co-operative Bank and one Assistant Manager in each of the branch offices. To provide long-term loan for the agriculturists one branch office of the Bihar State Land Mortgage Bank, Patna is running at Purnea. One Branch Manager along with one Land Valuation Officer has been posted by the Government to manage the function of this branch office.

The District Co-operative Federation works for the development of Co-operative Societies in the district. All the Co-operative Societies are affiliated to the Bihar State Co-operative Federation. It imparts or manages to impart training to the members of the Co-operative Societies.

Co-operative Societies have made a remarkable progress in the post independence period.

1. *The Central Co-operative Bank.*

	As on 30.6.47.	As on 30.6.60.
1. Total no. of Bank	3	1*
	Rs.	Rs.
1. Paid Share Capital ..	21,689	2,20,036
2. Loan advanced ..	48.434	11,90,759
3. Total demand of the Bank	76,970	11,52,453

There were 218 societies affiliated with the banks before 30th June 1947. But after that the number of societies increased up to 853 in 1960.

*The Araria and Kishanganj Central Co-operative Banks have been amalgamated in Purnea District Central Co-operative Bank.

The progress achieved by the Co-operative Societies will be apparent from the statistics for 30th June 1960 given below:—

Type of societies.	Total number of societies.	Total number of members.	Paid-up share capital.
			Rs.
1. Multipurpose Co-operative Societies (including Credit Co-operative Societies).	965	28,422	3,69,671
2. *Sarvodaya Sahyog Samiti* ..	23	..	..
3. Weavers' Co-operative Societies.	32	5,244	40,146
4. Fishermen's Co-operative Societies.	21	1,221	10,759
5. Co-operative Stores ..	20	909	8,160
6. Dairy Co-operative Societies	3	..	..
7. Labourers' Co-operative Societies.	32	..	..
8. Oilmen's Co-operative Societies.	21	246	7,853
9. Joint Co-operative Farming.	11	401	..
10. *Vyapar Mandal Sahyog Samiti*	7	..	..
11. Industrial Co-operative Societies.	77	..	..
12. Irrigation Co-operative Societies.	2	..	..
13. Large-sized Co-operative Societies.	10	33,141	1 11,377
14. Purnea Co-operative Sugar Factory.	1	1,642	19,43,631

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY DEPARTMENT.

The District Animal Husbandry Officer, Purnea, with his headquarters at Purnea, is in charge of the Animal Husbandry Department in the district. He is under the administrative

control of the Deputy Director of Animal Husbandry, Bhagalpur Range, with his headquarters at Bhagalpur and the Director of Animal Husbandry, Bihar with his headquarters at Patna.

Before September, 1954 the present Animal Husbandry Department was running under two different departments, namely, Veterinary Department and Animal Husbandry Department under two technical heads. During September, 1954 these two departments were amalgamated and Director of Veterinary Services was designated as Director of Animal Husbandry, Bihar.

The District Animal Husbandry Officer is assisted by the Veterinary and Animal Husbandry Supervisors whose strength is twenty-six, who are posted in each block to look after the Animal Husbandry work. There are two stock-men and one messenger to assist the Animal Husbandry Supervisors. Apart from them a Livestock Inspector and a Fodder Officer are working under the guidance of the District Animal Husbandry Officer at the district headquarters, Purnea.

During the First Five-Year Plan, five schemes were taken and are in operation and in the Second Five-Year Plan 12 schemes were taken and are in operation. A brief review of important schemes are given below.

Scheme concerning improvement of breeds.—To improve the local breeds of cattle, the two schemes namely, bull distribution and artificial insemination are in operation.

(*a*) *Bull distribution scheme.*—This scheme was started in First Five-Year Plan and also has been taken in the Second Five-Year Plan. Under this scheme 10 *Hariana* bulls are distributed in each block and Rs. 10 is given to each bull-keeper per month for the maintenance.

(*b*) *Artificial insemination scheme.*—This scheme was taken in the First Five-Year Plan and during this period three artificial insemination centres were started at Purnea, Kishanganj and Katihar. During Second Five-Year Plan four artificial insemination centres were opened at Dhamdaha, Araria, Forbesganj and Manihari. Under these seven main artificial insemination centres 15 artificial insemination sub-centres are running. Live-stock Overseer remains in charge of the main centres and stock-men look after the sub-centres.

Eradication of Rinder Pest.—Under this scheme it has been decided to eradicate Rinder Pest disease by vaccinating all the heads of cattle.

Poultry development.—Under this scheme one poultry development centre has been opened at Purnea during the First Five-Year Plan and during the Second Five-Year Plan two poultry extension centres at Katihar and Azam Nagar and three hatching centres at Kishanganj, Forbesganj and Araria have been opened.

Fodder development.—To encourage the farmers for fodder growing seeds and cuttings of different types of fooder are distributed to the farmers free of cost. Besides this at each block headquarters in two acres of land different types of fodder grass namely, Napier, Pasa, Guinea and *Berseem* have been introduced in the fodder demonstration plots.

Cattle shows.—To encourage the cattle owners for improving their livestock one cattle show in each block is organised once in a year, and one district cattle shows in a year.

Red Purnea Cattle Farm.—The Red Purnea Cattle Breeding Farm is running in this district since 1st January 1956 and it has got an area of 105 acres of land. The cows of the farm are of red Purnea Breed, which are very poor in milk production.

The schemes which are mentioned above have been introduced with an idea for improving the local breeds and for the control of the diseases.

Industry Department.

The District Industries Officer, Purnea, with headquarters at Purnea, is under the direct control of the Director of Industries, Bihar, with headquarters at Patna. There is one Inspector of Industries at headquarters. Besides there are also three more Inspectors of Industries who are posted in subdivisions namely, Kishanganj, Katihar and Araria. There are 12 Industrial Extension Supervisors in the different Community Development Blocks of the district.

The district of Purnea is not industrialised. About 90 per cent of the population still depends upon agriculture. There is one Engineering School at Purnea city and one Industrial Training Institute at Katihar. There is also one Industrial School located at Purnea, where girl students are given training in knitting, embroidery and tailoring. There are two embroidery schools for ladies at Katihar and Purnea. One Dye House has been started at Purnea. At present there is one Finishing Master who is in charge of the Dye House, who is assisted by one Dyeing Artist.

ELECTRICITY DEPARTMENT.

The Electrical Executive Engineer who has his headquarters at Katihar is the administrative head of the Electricity Department at the district level. He is under the control of the Electrical Superintending Engineer, North Bihar Electrical Circle with his headquarters at Muzaffarpur. The Chief Engineer, Bihar Electricity Board with his headquarters at Patna is the head of the department.

The Executive Engineer is assisted by four Assistant Electrical Engineers with their headquarters at Katihar, Purnea, Kishanganj and Araria. They are in charge of transmission and distribution in their respective jurisdictions. There are three power houses at Katihar, Kishanganj and Forbesganj. Each power house is controlled by the Power House Superintendent posted at each place.

The following towns, namely, Katihar, Purnea, Kishanganj and Forbesganj have been electrified till 1960. The work of electrification is under progress in villages namely, Kasba, Jalalgarh, Champa Nagar, Sri Nagar, Bathnaha, Araria, Kalari, Rampur, Korha, Khagra, Garh Banaili, Krityanand Nagar and Banmankhi, etc.

The Electric Supply Division at Katihar was created in the month of November, 1954. In this short period the progress in electricity in the district, i.e., Purnea district has a remarkable success.

FOREST DEPARTMENT.

The Forest Department of Purnea district is placed under the Divisional Forest Officer with his headquarters at Bettiah. The immediate superior of the Divisional Forest Officer is the Conservator of Forests, Development Circle, with his headquarters at Ranchi. The Conservator of Forests is under the Chief Conservator of Forests with his headquarters at Ranchi.

The Forest Division is subdivided into two ranges namely, Purnea and Araria. There is one beat in Purnea and three beats in Araria Afforestation Range. Besides this there are five sub-beats in Purnea and nine sub-beats in Araria. Each range is placed under a Range Officer and each beat under a Beat Officer. Sub-beats are looked after by Forest Guards.

The afforestation work of Purnea district is managed by two ranges, namely, Purnea Afforestation Range with headquarters at Purnea and other at Araria Afforestation Range with headquarters at Araria.

The Divisional Forest Officer is charged with the task of planting above 1,000 acres of Blank Forest areas every year within the Purnea Forest Division. Some afforestation work has already been done in the Purnea Forest Division.

Postal Department.

The Postal Department including Telegraphs and Telephones is under the Central Government. For the administration of postal services there is one Superintendent of Post Offices with his headquarters at Purnea. He is directly under the control of the Post Master-General, Bihar with his headquarters at Patna.

The jurisdiction of the Superintendent roughly extends over the whole of the Civil district of Purnea. For administrative purposes and for running the services efficiently the entire Purnea Postal Division is subdivided into four subdivisions and each subdivision is under an Inspector of the rank of junior selection grade of the postal service. The headquarters of all the Inspectors are at Purnea. The Inspectors are assisted by Overseers.

The Purnea Post Office is the Head Post Office. There are thirty-six sub-post offices and two hundred and eighty-nine branch post offices. The majority of the sub-post offices are served direct by mail communication with Railway Mail Service and few are served by roads through motor buses and runners.

The two hundred and eighty-nine branch post offices are located at the bigger villages and serve the village neighbourhood. Some of them are located at villages where there are police *thanas*.

Employment Exchange.

The Employment Exchange Office was started at Katihar in 1950 under the charge of the District Employment Officer. Prior to 1956, the Directorate of Employment Exchange was under the Central Government and there used to be a Regional Director of National Employment at the State level. But since October, 1956 the department has come under the State Government and the administrative head is known as the State Director of National Employment Service. His headquarters is at Patna. Below him is the Deputy Director of National Employment Service with his headquarters at Patna. Below the Deputy Director is the Regional Employment Officer with his headquarters at each division. The work of Employment Exchange in the district of Purnea is looked after by the District Employment Officer of gazetted rank. He has no field staff but has some

office assistants to assist him in the work. The District Employment Officer of Purnea is controlled by the Regional Employment Officer, Bhagalpur. Details of the working of the Employment Exchange will be found in the Chapter 'Economic Trends'.

KOSI PROJECT DEPARTMENT.

The details of Kosi river have been discussed separately. The Kosi Project is under the direct control of the Chief Administrator of Kosi Project, Bihar with his headquarters at Patna. In the district of Purnea the chief activities of the Kosi Project are concentrated in excavating the Kosi Canals which after completion are expected to irrigate the vast extensive arid land, known as Araria plain extending from west of Purnea to Jogbani. This plain was getting more and more sandy and dunes had already started forming owing to the absence of wind-breakers. The top soil is only about an inch.

The Superintending Engineer of the Kosi Canal who has his headquarters at Bathnaha about 48 miles from Purnea is the administrative head at the district level so far as the administration of Kosi Canal is concerned. At Purnea district there are five canal divisions, viz., two at Bathnaha, two at Purnea and one at Banmankhi, each under the charge of an Executive Engineer of the Canal Division. Each Canal Division is divided into a number of subdivisions. Each subdivision is under the charge of Assistant Engineer of Kosi Canal. There are a large number of Overseers under the immediate control of Assistant Engineer.

Besides Kosi Project the scope of the Irrigation Department in this district is very limited. There is a post of Assistant Engineer of Irrigation with his headquarters at Purnea under the Revenue Department. He is the only officer to look after the irrigation work in the district. Since the scope of Minor Irrigation is not very large, there have been very little headway in irrigational work. The Assistant Engineer is under the control of the Executive Engineer, Irrigation, Saharsa district. There are five Overseers who work under the Assistant Engineer of Minor Irrigation Work, Purnea. The achievement of the Department due to limited scope is not very encouraging Only wells have been constructed for irrigational purposes.

CHAPTER XI.

LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION.

The last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* by L. S. S. O'Malley, I.C.S. (1911) has the following regarding Land Revenue Administration:—

"*Revenue History*.—The earliest record of the land revenue of the district appears in Todar Mal's rent-roll of 1572. The *parganas* which now make up the district were then comprised in three *Sarkars*, viz., Puraniya, Tajpur and Monghyr. *Sarkar* Monghyr included the Dharampur *pargana*, which was assessed at 40,00,000 *dams*, i.e., at the rate of 40 *dams* to one Akbarshahi rupee, one lakh. The portion of the district east of the Mahananda fell in *Sarkar* Tajpur, which also contained the west of Dinajpur and had in all 29 *mahals*, of which seven, assessed at about Rs. 74,000, can be identified with the present *parganas* of Badaur, Bhaura, Dilawarpur, Kumaripur, Maldwar, Surjyapur and Tajpur. The greater part of the district, as now constituted, formed *Sarkar* Puraniya, which consisted of nine *mahals*. One of these was called the *Fil Mahal*, the revenue of which was derived from dues paid on elephants caught in the Tarai forests. The remaining eight were Asonja (the present Asja), Dalmalpur, Haveli Puraniya, Jairampur (not identified), Katihar, Kadwa, Sripur and Sultanpur, which were assessed at 64,23,633 *dams*, i.e., approximately Rs. 1,60,000. The area thus assessed was about three-fifths of the present district: and the revenue of the whole district is roughly estimated at Rs. 3,34,000.

"A revision of the assessment was carried out by Murshid Kuli Khan (1704—25), under whose administration Purnea was included in the *chakla* or revenue division of Akbarnagar (Rajmahal). The revision, however, only affected Purnea in a very limited degree, for, as a frontier military province, the greater part of the land was assigned as *jagir* for the maintenance of troops. The revenue assessed

on the revenue-paying portion (known as *pargana* Sripur Dalmalpur) was Rs. 2,78,830, but of this amount Rs. 1,80,166 were assigned to the *Faujdar* Saif Khan (1722—52) as a *rakmi jagir* or personal grant of revenue. About this time there were large additions to the district area by conquest towards the north, and by the annexation of 4 *parganas* west of the Kosi, viz., Dhaphar, Nathpur, Dharampur and Garari. Nathpur is now a *pargana* of Bhagalpur, and the revenue of the remaining 3 *parganas* was assessed at Rs. 3,03,577, no part of which found its way into the provincial treasury. The revenue demand for the whole district was thus Rs. 5,82,517, but Saif Khan, is said to have realized 18 lakhs both from revenue and *abwabs* or cesses. With the exception of a little under one lakh (Rs 98,661), which was remitted to the treasury at Murshidabad, the whole of this large sum was retained by him as *jagir* for the support of himself and his troops.*

"Shuja-ud-din Khan (1725—39), the successor of Mursid Kuli Khan, seems to have made an effort to regulate this great estate. Some time before his death in 1739, he redistributed its lands into a revenue-paying portion, valued at Rs. 2,14,854, and a *jagir* portion, valued at Rs. 1,29,374. It was also subjected to considerable *abwabs*, which, it would seem, were never levied or brought to credit in the Murshida-bad Treasury, on whose books they were borne. The *abwabs* were the following:—(1) *Khasnavisi*, a fee paid by the *zamindars* to the officers and clerks of the treasury. It was supposed to amount to Rs. 2,373, but it is easy to understand that the powerful military chiefs of Purnea would not submit to such an impost. (2) The second was called *zar mahtut*, and consisted of four lesser component charges, viz., (*a*) *nazar punya*, presents exacted from landholders at the time of the annual settlements; (*b*) *bhai khilat*, a fee taken from *zamindars* to recoup the *Nawab* for the dresses of honour that he bestowed on them every year at the same period; (*c*) *pushtabandihi*, a charge for

**Fifth Report* (Madras reprint, 1883), pp. 265, 269, 302-3. Further details will be found on pp. 409—15 of that report.

embanking the rivers in the vicinity of Murshidabad; (*d*) *rasum nizarat*, a commission of 10 annas in every thousand rupees, levied by the officer in command of the treasury guard at Murshidabad on all revenue remittances from outlying districts. (3) The third, the *fauzdari abwab*, was the cause of much ill-feeling between the Purnea Governors and the Murshidabad *Nawabs*, and it is almost certain it was never realized. It was an additional assessment of Rs. 2,83,027 on the revenue portion of the estate, which was extended northward during the administration of Saif Khan. The Maratha *Chaut* of Rs. 24,018, if ever actually demanded, was not paid. The above facts show that, even when the power of the *Faujdars* was at its height, the land revenue demand amounted to over 6½ lakhs of rupees.

"This state of things continued unchanged under the tyranny of Siraj-ud-daula and the feeble administration of Mir Jafar Khan. About 1760, however, the pressing demands of the English made Mir Kasim Ali look around for new sources of revenue. The wealthy province of Purnea was one of the first to be examined and re-assessed. It was then discovered that its three last *Faujdars* had derived from it a land revenue of over 21 lakhs of rupees. The re-assessment in the first year of its application brought in an actual increase of revenue of Rs. 15,23,725; and the total amount collected was Rs. 21,09,415, including Rs. 74,134 collection charges, Rs. 56,071 for the maintenance of frontier garrisons, and Rs. 33,805 paid away in State charity. The net land revenue of the district, therefore, was Rs. 19,45,405. The collections, however, soon fell off. In 1764 Nanda Kumar (Nuncomar) reduced the net revenue to Rs. 17,88,174 by deducting twice over the charges for collection and establishment; and in 1765, on the assumption by the Company of the *Diwani*, it was again reduced, by the same expedient, to Rs. 14,22,586. Fraudulent reductions of a similar character were going on throughout Bengal, and to make up for them the demand for the whole province was raised in 1766 by 11 lakhs, of which

1¼ lakh fell to the share of Purnea, its revenue demand being thus 15½ lakhs. In 1768 it was found that no less than 21⅓ lakhs had been collected from the *zamindars* in the name of Government, and the demand was, therefore, raised to Rs. 17,31,000, only to fall next year to Rs. 13,42,000.

"The gradual steps by which the great revenue of Purnea became thus diminished have been given at considerable length by Mr. J. Grant. in his *"Historical and Comparative Analysis of the Finance of Bengal"* quoted in *The Fifth Report of the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East Indian Company* (1812). His conclusion is expressed as follows:— 'If, under these successive fluctuations, it were asked on what principle they were brought about, no one can controvert the fact that they were the mere sleight-of-hand tricks of a crafty *mutassaddi* corruptly subservient to the chicanery of his master, who himself was, in all probability, profoundly ignorant of every local circumstance that ought to influence a change, or entirely regardless of the measure of public receipts, provided there was no diminution in the standard of what came into his private coffers by barefaced peculation.'

"In 1770 the year of the great famine, the gross demand was 14 lakhs, the collections being a little over 12 lakhs. In 1772 the demand fell still lower in consequence of abundant harvests, which brought down the price of rice by 200 per cent. It was reduced to 11½ lakhs, nor was the limit of the falling off in the revenue reached even then. In 1789 and down to the time of the Permanent Settlement, little more than 8 lakhs was collected, or only a little more than one third of the assessment of Mir Kasim Ali. Besides this, 645,430 *bighas*, or 350,000 acres of land, had been separated from the revenue-paying area under various pretexts, principally as grants for charitable and religious purposes, but really collusively retained by landholders of different degrees.

"The Permanent Settlement was concluded with 38 proprietors owning 36 estates, and the total revenue settled with them was just under 12½ lakhs, of

which Rs. 6,81,796 were due from the three *parganas* of Surjyapur, Dharampur and Haveli. Subsequently, as the result of the resumption proceedings betweeen 1836 and 1846, 1,550 estates, which had escaped assessment and were held revenue-free under an invalid title, were resumed and brought on the revenue-roll. The area affected was 425 square miles, and the increase of revenue was just under one lakh.

'*Surveys and Settlements.*—The revenue survey was carried out in this district between 1844 and 1848. In 1887—90 a settlement was made of the Maldwar estate covering an area of 58 square miles, and in 1887—92 of 201 square miles comprised in the Srinagar Banaili estate. Survey and settlement operations were carried on in the remainder of the district in 1901—1908. The distribution of the area dealt with during this last settlement under the different tenancies is shown in the following table:—

Status.	Number of tenancies.	Total so held (Acres).	Percentage to total occupied area.	Average size of each tenancy (Acres).
Lands held by proprietors.	2,554	49,844	2.2	20.5
Cultivated by tenure-holders.	47,303	426,788	19.0	9.0
Ryots at fixed rates	19,952	115,205	5.1	5.7
Settled and occupancy *ryots*.	436,759	1,549,604	69.0	3.5
Non-occupancy and *diara ryots*.	21,715	72,546	3.2	3.3
Rent free holders ..	10,843	30,150	1.3	2.5
Under-*ryots* with occupancy rights.	59,202	61,544	2.7	1.03
Under-*ryots* without occupancy rights.	39,537	45,689	2.0	1.1

"With regard to this table it should be explained that the average size of each *ryoti* holding is no index to the actual amount of land held by each *ryot*, for one tenant frequently holds several tenancies, each liable for a separate item of rent. The old ancestral holdings and those held at favourable rents are adhered to with grim tenacity, even though floods may keep them submerged for months or even for a couple of years. On the other hand, tenancies recently taken up are abandoned freely, when their productive power has been impaired, or when the tenant can no longer make a profit out of them.

"*Land Tenures.*—The various forms of land tenure prevailing in Purnea are, for the most part, the same as in other districts of the Division. Detailed description is, therefore, confined to the cases where tenures present distinct characteristics.

"*Zamindaris.*—The Decennial Settlement of Purnea, which was concluded in the year 1790, when Mr. Heatly was Collector and Mr. Colebrooke (who carried out the measure) Assistant Collector, was made with the *zamindars* for entire *parganas* or fractions of *parganas*. There were then 36 estates with 38 proprietors, whereas the number of estates borne on the *tauzi* or revenue-roll is now (1,909) 1,707 of which 205 are revenue-free estates. There are two *tauzi* serials:—(1) a *fasli* serial for the Fasli *mahals*, i.e., all estates in *parganas* Dharampur, Harwat, Dhaphar and Chai; (2) a Bengali serial for the Bengali *mahals* in the remainder of the district. Of 1,712 revenue-paying estates, 461 are in the Fasli and 1,251 in the Bengali serial. This almost unique system is believed to date back to the conquest of the *parganas* west of the old Kosi by the *Faujdar* Saif Khan about 1731.

"About half the land revenue of the district is paid by three estates, viz., Dharampur Haveli and Surjyapur, and the total incidence of revenue paid by permanently-settled estates (which extend over 4,742 square miles) is only annas 6–2. The gross rental for the district in 1872, when road and public works cess was first levied was Rs. 28,59,695. The gross rental for the year ending 31st March 1902 was Rs. 35,30,747, and that for the year ending

31st March 1908 was Rs. 43,83,196, the total land revenue demand for the same year being Rs. 11,79,591, including temporarily-settled estates. 'The contrast between these figures is,' Mr. Byrne observes, 'remarkable, the present gross rental being more than double the highest known revenue demand from the district and the present revenue demand being less than half the highest revenue demand.'

"Another respect in which Purnea is unique among North Bihar districts is that there has been but little subdivision of proprietary interests. In 1867 the number of estates on the revenue roll was 1,636 of which 1,550 were the result of the resumption proceedings of 1836—46. In 1888 the number had risen to 1,670, and in the last 20 years only 54 partitions have been effected in the Collectorate. The small extent to which subdivision of proprietary interests has gone on may be realised from the fact that up to 31st March 1907, the total number of interests registered in the 1,712 revenue-paying estates was only 8,092.

"*Tenure-holders.*—The following summary of the position of tenure-holders is extracted from the Settlement Report. Excluding Surjyapur, an area of 1,422,651 acres is leased out to permanent tenure-holders. Out of this, 906,158 acres are held on *patni* leases; 248,933 acres are held at fixed rents, on leases other than *patni* leases; and 267,560 acres are held by permanent tenure-holders [as defined in section 3 (8) of the Bengal Tenancy Act], whose rents are not fixed. Thus, outside Surjyapur 1,155,091 acres are held by permanent tenure-holders on fixed rents. In Surjyapur, the Khagra estate has leased out 140,080 acres at fixed rents and the other shareholders 57,646 acres, also at fixed rents.

"The area mortgaged to tenure-holders is only 1,343 acres, and the area leased temporarily on farming leases is 76,118 acres. These together amount to 3.2 per cent of the total area, while the area held by permanent tenure-holders (including those whose rents are fixed as well as those whose rents are not fixed) amounts to 59.4 per cent of the total area. Thus, in all, 62.6 per cent of the total area is held by

genuine tenure-holders who pay rent. In addition to this, 102,030 acres, i.e., 4.2 per cent of the total area, are held rent-free. Every rent-free holder who has sublet any part of his tenancy is classed as a tenure-holder; and as almost everyone of them sublets some part of his tenancy, it may be taken that at least 4 per cent of this rent-free area is held by tenure-holders. This would give 63.4 per cent of the total area as held by permanent tenure-holders (including fixed rent and rent-free tenure-holders); and adding the 3.2 per cent held by temporary tenure-holders, we get the percentage of the total area held by all sorts of tenure-holders as 66.6.

"*Taluks.*—*Taluks* are not so numerous as in Bengal, and are all *shikmi,* i.e., dependent. The absence of *huzuri* or independent *taluks* is accounted for by the fact that, at the time of the Permanent Settlement, the *pargana* system had not been broken up, as had been the case, for instance, all over the Rajshahi Division; and Government was able to make its assessments and settlements on the well-marked lines afforded by the *pargana* as a fiscal unit of landed property. The same reason is given for the absence of *taufir* or incremental estates. Although large tracts were unreclaimed, and, in fact, had not been assessed, the lay within recognised areas and the advantages of their cultivation went to the landholders.

"*Istimrari* taluks.—Dependent *taluks* are usually of the *istimrari* species, i.e., farms or leases granted by the landholder in perpetuity at a fixed stipulated rent, and often, in cases where the lessee was a relative, favourite, or old servant of the lessor, at a quit rent. In this district they are of comparatively old origin. Some of the *istimrari taluks* or *istimrars* as they are called in Purnea, were granted by the *Nawabs* of Purnea; and several, it appears, where created or confirmed by a farmer of the district revenue, Achinta Rai, about 1771 shortly after the assumption by the Company of the management of the revenues. The *kanungos* of each *pargana* also usually held one or more *istimrars* from the *zamindars,* e.g., Gopikanta Rai, a Bengali of Kantanagar near Karagola, who was *kanungo* of

Dharampur in 1790, held five or six *istimrars;* while two or three more were acquired by Harichand Rai Lala, a *kanungo* of Nathpur and Garari.

"These tenures are most numerous in the *parganas* of Haveli, Dharampur, Fatehpur, Singhia and Sripur; and the following are some of the largest:—(1) *Taluk* Vishnupur in *pargana* Haveli was granted to Aga Muhammad Ali Khan, the last *Nawab* of Purnea, and grandfather of Aga Saifulla Khan, a leading Musalman gentleman of the town of Purnea, on whose death about 20 years ago it passed to his niece Bibi Kamarunnissa Khanam, widow of Saiyad Raza Ali Khan Bahadur. From a copy of the *sanad* filed in the Collectorate, it would appear to have been granted by Achinta Rai, the farmer, but it is more probable that it was only confirmed by him. (2) *Taluk* Gohoma, in *pargana* Haveli, held by Mr. Forbes of Sultanganj. (3) *Taluks* Perwa and Ramai, in *pargana* Sultanpur.

"Large *istimrari* and *mukarari* tenures are common in the Kishanganj subdivision, and there are over 200 in the whole district. When an *istimrari taluk* is sublet in perpetuity, it is called, in Purnea, not a *dar-istimrari,* but a *patni taluk.* In fact, the word *patni* seems to be loosely applied to any tenure created in perpetuity.

"*Patni tenures.*—The *patni* tenure was introduced into Purnea about the year 1838 by the *zamindars* of Jamuikandi in Murshidabad, now known as the Paikpara family, when their estate of Raghupur Raunia in Dharampur was let out as a *patni taluk.* This property formerly belonged to Raja Madhu Singh of Darbhanga, but was sold for the recovery of arrears of revenue in 1790; and as sales were then held in Murshidabad, it came into the hands of its present owners. Subsequently, Babu Pratap Singh, one of the large landlords of the district, sublet his Purnea estates in *patni,* and in 1877 the number of *patnis* had risen to 409. The number has since largely increased owing to the existence of absentee landlords and their desire to raise large sums by creating such tenures. It is said that in the whole district there are now

probably about 500 important *patnis;* they are especially numerous in the Khagra estate, where 138,593 acres are held on *patni* and *dar-patni* lease.

"The incidents of the tenure are too well known to require detailed notice, but one peculiarity which formerly attached to it in Purnea may be noticed, viz., that arrears were realized by a civil suit, and not by the summary procedure prescribed by Regulation VIII of 1819, owing to an erroneous notion that the *patni* law was not applicable to a purely Fasli *mahal* or Bihar estate, such as Dharampur. This question was raised and submitted to the Board of Revenue for decision some 20 years ago. It was decided that *patni* sales should, if necessary, be held at the beginning and middle of the Fasli year where that era prevails, i.e., in *pargana* Dharampur. It would, therefore, appear that two sets of *patni* sales may be held by the Collector, one for the Bengali and the other for the Fasli portion of the district. The orders of the Board were based on a previous decision in a similar difficulty which arose in Orissa in 1840. From the Settlement Report it appears that this belief still lingers, for it is stated:—'An interesting, but apparently quite unfounded belief may be here noticed, viz., that *patnis* in the Fasli *mahals* cannot be sold up summarily under Regulation VIII of 1819 for arrears. However, very few *patnis* are found in the western part of the district, where the Fasli *mahals* are found, so the question is not of much practical importance.' In the last twenty years, 203 *patnis* have been sold up under the usual summary procedure, and these sales excite more interest than the ordinary revenue sales.

Dar-patnis are under-tenures created by a *patnidar,* by which he transfers his own rights in the whole or part of his *taluks.* A *dar-patni* is thus a *patni* of the second degree, while a similar under-tenure created by a *dar-patnidar,* or a *patni* of the third degree, is called a *sepatni.* The first *dar-patni* dates from 1854 and the first *sepatni* from 1871.

"*Nankar taluks.*—*Nankar taluks* are tracts of land originally exempted from assessment during the Mughal administration, being intended for the support of

zamindars and their families. They were confined to *parganas* Sripur and Surjyapur at the time of the Permanent Settlement, and according to the Quinquennial Register of 1798 were four in number. At present only one such estate appears on the Road Cess Registers, viz., *taluk* Nawa Nankar in the village of Pahasra.

'*Mustajiris* and *mutahidis*.—*Mustajiris* are tenures held on contract by professed middlemen between the original landholder and the peasantry. They are equivalent to the *ijaras* of Bengal in all respects and are very common in Purnea. The usual period of such leases is five years, and the term *mutahidi* is applied where a whole *pargana* is farmed out, and the lease is for a longer period, e.g., 20 years or more. The evils of the system are well illustrated by the remarks of a former Collector of Purnea:—'Though the *zamindars* are moderate and liberal landlords, they are indirectly to blame for the worst feature that exists in the land system of this portion of the district, that of middlemen known as *mustajirs*. Nothing can be worse for the landlord and the cultivator than the system of five-yearly leases granted to *mustajirs*, as the *mustajir* offers a higher rent at each settlement, which he in turn recovers from the cultivators. The latter appear profoundly ignorant of their rights under the law, though, being a prosperous class, they are daily becoming more able to hold their own. The *mustajir*, in addition to looting the *ryots* to the best of his ability by enhancing rents, in which process he is materially assisted by the disinclination of the tenants to have their holdings measured, and their accepting enhancements in preference to measurement, has one or two other resources. For instance, he has a habit of taking full advantage of his temporary lease for creating holdings in his own name. Land is plentiful, and he maps out for himself a fine holding at a nominal rent, which holding survives his temporary lease. Then, he has an amiable way of ousting his landlord by the creation of *miliks* or rent-free holdings by a well recognized process, which is known as converting *mal* or rent-paying land into

milik or rent-free. The *mustajir*, being generally selected by the landlord from among the most clever and influential men, or briefly, a man whom the other tenants fear, is specially qualified not only to coerce his neighbours into paying rent, but also to turn the tables on his employer, and use his authority to make the tenants of his master acknowledge the *mustajir* as their landlord by right of an imaginary *milik*, or rent-free holding, which he invents, and the rents of which he collects as *milikdar*. This *milik* remains in his possession for ever: a few civil suits, often collusively carried out between the *mustajir* as *milikdar* and the *ryots* whose lands he is transferring rent-free to himself provide the unjust steward with documentary evidence of title, which it is difficult for the *zamindar* subsequently to upset. By this means many men of humble origin and little or no education have succeeded in creating for themselves very comfortable little properties.'*

'This account has been confirmed by the experience gained in the course of the recent settlement. 'The local influence of the middlmen', writes Mr. Byrne, 'grows with their wealth, and when a *taluka* has been given over to their tender mercies for a few years, it becomes impossible for the *maliks* to realize anything except through the middlemen. No outsider dares take settlement of the *taluka*. If the *maliks* attempt to make direct collections, they meet at once with an insurmountable obstacle, inasmuch as they have no papers at all on which to sue. The local middleman knows enough about the law to render it extremely dangerous for the *malik* to try the moral effect of the persuasive powers of a swarm of peons with thick *lathis* on recalcitrant *ryots*. The *maliks* are now practically obliged to make settlements with local middlemen of influence; and, further-more, they are also employed as *tahsildars* for areas which they do not hold on leases. The *malik* has no interest in the welfare of his tenants; he accepts what the *tahsildars* pay him in, and he asks no questions about what they do in the villages. As usual,

*Cameos of Indian Districts (Purnea), Calcutta Review, 1889.

most of the *tahsildar's* profits come from *abwabs*, which the tenants pay up readily enough, provided their annual rent is not interfered with. Uncertainty in that demand is the one thing which tenants dread most.'

"*Gachbandi.—Gachbandi* is the name of a tenure which is very commonly met with in *pargana* Surjyapur, and almost nowhere else. It was in force there before the time of the Permanent Settlement, and is believed to owe its origin to the reclamation of jungle lands taken from the Nepalis about the middle of the 18th century. The term implies a system of letting out blocks of land contained within certain boundaries for a lump sum without measuring their area or fixing any rate of rent. The land thus farmed out is called a *gach*, and its holder a *gachdar*. It may constitute a tenure or a cultivator's holding, but generally the former. A *gachdar* who does not cultivate the whole of it himself sublets a portion to cultivators or to *kulaitdars*. The existing tenures of this kind are ancient ones, which have passed down from father to son. They are now no longer created, being clearly the outcome of a state of things in which land was so plentiful, that precision in assessing rent was not necessary.

"In the course of the recent settlement it has generally been found that *gachdars* are tenure-holders; but in certain areas, where the lands are very fertile, the *gachdars* are undistinguishable from ordinary occupancy *ryots*. They hold only very small areas of two or three acres, and if any part is sublet, it is only a small plot on which a ploughman or other servant is allowed to build a house. The operation of the Muhammadan law of inheritance has no doubt accelerated this minute subdivision, which is most noticeable in the villages near the Dinajpur border, about 10 miles due east from Kishanganj. Even where *gachdars* have thus in process of time become undistinguishable from occupancy *ryots*, they can still express their share in the entire *gach* in annas, *gandas*, etc. It has

also been frequently found that a small residue of the lands of a *gach* remains undivided. This is usually known as the *shamilat* area, and frequently consists of a graveyard, a jute-steeping tank, or a patch of unculturable land.

"*Resumed jagirs.*—Resumed *jagir* lands are only found in the *parganas* situated along the Nepal frontier, viz., Sripur, Fatehpur Singhia and Sultanpur. They were originally rent-free and were given for the performance of certain services, such as the prevention of the incursions of wild elephants, pigs, and tigers, coming from the Morang or Tarai, upon the cultivated lands of the district. They were mostly held by people of the Rajbansi caste, who were called *sardars*. When the service for which the lands were granted was no longer required, the holdings were assessed to rent. In many cases they have been alienated by the descendants of the original grantees. The largest of these *jagirs* is *Jagir* Phaku in *pargana* Haveli, held by Mr. Forbes and others, which pays a revenue of Rs. 1,178. A considerable *jagir* was also attached to *taluk* Ramai, in pargana Sultanpur, called *taluk* Pipra, and was conferred on one Mir Saiyad Ali, a native of Gulastan in Persia, in consideration of his keeping up a body of men for guarding the northern frontier.

"Ryoti *holdings.*—The position of tenants with *ryoti* holdings in Purnea is summarized by Mr. Byrne as follows:—'The number of *ryoti* holdings whose owners have the rights of *ryots* at fixed rents, of settled *ryots* and of occupancy *ryots* amounts to 455,410, and the area held by them to 1,656,205 acres. This is equivalent to almost exactly 73.5 per cent of the total occupied area. This is a smaller percentage than is usual in the North Bihar districts, but it will be borne in mind that the permanent tenure-holders in Purnea occupy a very large area that would in other districts probably be held by *ryots*, that their position is most secure, that the population is comparatively sparse, and that a considerable culturable area is still uncultivated.' The terms usually applied to holdings of *ryots* at

fixed rents are *mukarari jot, maurusi jot* and *kasht;* while occupancy holdings are known as *jot jama.* The following is an account of some special forms of tenancies.

'*Halhasila.—Halhasila jot* is a species of tenure prevailing on the banks of the Kosi and the Ganges, but unknown in other parts of the district. Its peculiarity is that the rent is determined every year by measurement of the area actually cultivated, and the assessment of a rate fixed in accordance with the area and the nature of the crop according to the rates (called *bera*) recognized for each crop. The measurement is made after the crop is reaped, and is generally carried on from the month of January (Magh) to March (Chait) by an *amin* or surveyor on behalf of the landlord, and the village *patwari*, in the presence of the cultivator. If the landlord fails to measure the lands after the crops have been cut, and to ascertain the rent according to the nature of the crop grown on each plot, he can recover only as much rent as he got in the previous year. If he neglects to measure the land for a number of years, he can claim only the rent of the year in which the lands were last measured. The rent of each holding is fluctuating, and increases or decreases every year according to the area cultivated. If a tenant holds 30 acres and cultivates only 20, allowing the rest to remain fallow, he pays rent for the cultivated 20 acres according to the crop sown on them, the fallow land being unassessed If the whole 30 acres are left fallow, he cannot let the lands to another. Under this system the *zamindar* is at the mercy of the *ryot*, who may cultivate as much or as little of his *jot* as he likes and pay accordingly. It requires the *zamindar* to keep up a large establishment to measure the land every year, in order to ascertain what crops are grown, and to assess rent accordingly. It is said to give rise to much dishonesty on the part of subordinates, and to be a most unsatisfactory and difficult system to work. The holders are usually members of the higher Hindu castes or Musalmans.

"These tenures are believed to be of old origin. The letters of the Collector to the Board of Revenue, before the period of the Permanent Settlement, show that the original cultivator's tenure in Dharampur was *bhaoli*, that is to say, rent was paid in kind, half the produce generally going to the *zamindar*. Rent in kind was then being gradually altered into a money rent by the *zamindari amla* or agents in collusion with the *ryots*, and it is said that it was about this time that the *halhasila* system came into existence. Now-a-days, on the banks of the Ganges and the Kosi, numbers of non-resident *ryots*, known as *dohatwars*, principally from Bhagalpur district, take *halhasila jots* as yearly tenants; in such cases the holdings, owing to the changes in the course of the river, are not the same from year to year.

"*Birawari*.—A somewhat similar tenure is that called *birawari*, a word derived from *bira*, literally meaning a stalk or bundle of stalks, which is given the more extended meaning of produce. It implies a system under which rent is paid according to the nature of the crop grown in different parts of holdings, e.g., whether it is rice, tobacco, etc. The main difference between the *birawari* and *halhasila* systems is that under the former every plot of land is assessed at some rate, whereas under the latter only the lands that actually bear a crop are assessed to rent.

"*Jot jama*.—Another tenure met with in the Dharampur *pargana* is that called *jot jama*, under which the *ryot* selects whatever land he likes for cultivation up to the total area entered in his agreement but only within the limits of a certain specified village. The origin of the system is easily explained. The river Kosi, after covering large tracts of land with sand, and rendering them uninhabitable and uncultivable, takes some new direction, and in course of years this land again becomes fit for occupation. The villagers then return, and break up patches here and there, their rent being assessed according to the nature and extent of their cultivation. It is necessary to assess at low rates, in order to attract cultivators. In course of time these

disconnected patches become well-defined *jots,* and are entered in the village books against the names of the cultivators. As the land is reclaimed from jungle and cultivation advances, the villages adopt the *halhasila* system instead of the *jot jama.* On the other band, if the villages are again devastated by the Kosi and relapse into jungle, the *halhasila* system gives way to the *jot jama.*

"*Harbera and mushakhas.*—There are one or two other similar systems of collections, which are rare, and appertain either to single village or individual cases. One is called *harbera,* i.e., a different rate is charged for the same piece of land according to the crop grown thereon. It seems the same as the *birawari* tenancy under cultivation. A second is known as *mushakhas,* and is equivalent to an ordinary lease of an uncertain quantity of land at a fixed quit-rent, payable whether all or any part of the land is cultivated or not.

"*Under-ryots' holdings.*—The statistics compiled during the recent settlement show that number of tenancies held by under-*ryots* is 98,739, of which 59,202 were found to have occupancy rights attaching to them by custom, and the remainder (39,537) have not this incident. The total area held by under-*ryots* is 107,233 acres, or 6 per cent of the total *ryoti* area. Altogether 61,544 acres are held on cash rent, the occupants having occupancy rights in respect of 44,291 acres. The balance (34,946 acres) is held on produce rents, out of which the occupants have by custom occupancy rights in respect of 17,253 acres. The tenant who pays rent in kind is thus recognized as having a somewhat better position in this district than he usually has elsewhere.

"The comparison of the total number of tenancies held by under-*ryots* with the total of *ryoti* holdings is,' writes Mr. Byrne, 'interesting. The former figure represents 21.7 per cent of the latter, yet the area held by under-*ryots* is only 6 per cent of the total *ryoti* area. The explanation of this is that most under-*ryots* are so only in respect of small plots for house sites and homesteads. House sites are at a premium in this district owing to its liability

to inundation, and this is reflected in the average rate paid per acre by under-*ryots*, which reaches the abnormal figure of Rs. 10-2-5 in Islampur *thana*. The fact that most of the area held by under-*ryots* is homestead land, also helps to explain the growth of the custom by which they are recognized as having occupancy rights. No one will build a house unless he is morally certain that he has a better status than that of a mere tenant-at-will in the lands on which he proposes to build'

"*Kulaitdars*.—An under-*ryot's* holding is commonly called *kulaiti* and he himself a *kulaitdar*. When held on payment of produce rent, it is divided into three kinds according to the manner of payment of rent—(1) *Bhaoli*, in which a certain fixed amount of produce is stipulated to be paid as rent, regardless of the actual outturn, i.e., it is recoverable even should the crop fail; (2) *Adhia*, in which half the produce, ascertained by weighment after reaping, is taken as rent; and (3) *Kutbandi*, in which the produce of the standing crop is estimated and half of the estimated outturn handed over in lieu of rent.

"*Rent-free lands*.—In the Surjyapur *pargana* the total area held rent-free by tenure-holders is 30,150 acres, and in the rest of the district the area so held under valid titles is 102,030 acres, i.e., nearly 3.6 per cent of the total area.

"*Miliks*.—The most common rent-free property is that called *milik*, a term which is in ordinary language supplanting all other names for rent-free holdings in Purnea. Theoretically the tenure dates back to a period anterior to the Permanent Settlement, and originated in grants given for religious and charitable purposes, or as a reward for services rendered, or as remuneration of services to be rendered. Such grants, when duly established before the British revenue authorities, at or subsequent to the Permanent Settlement, were not assessed to land revenue. In some cases they were entered as *lakhiraj* or revenue-free estates in the Collectorate records; in others they remained rent-free tenures embraced in a revenue-free estate, but

excluded from the assets of the estate for the purpose of estimating the land revenue to be paid by such estate. When resumption proceedings were instituted, a great number of invalid revenue-free tenures were brought under assessment on favourable terms, the revenue being half of what would have been assessed but for the fact that the holders had enjoyed exemption from revenue for a long period. Such is the theoretical orgin of all such tenures, and such is no doubt the real origin of some of them.

"In practice, however, many unwarranted claims to hold land rent-free have been made. The large uncultivated area existing in some estates has facilitated such pretensions and rendered them, when made, difficult of disproof in the courts of law. The landlord himself and his superior servants may remain in ignorance of the fact that land has been occupied in some remote and previously uncultivated part of his property, and this ignorance may continue for a period sufficiently long to justify a Judge in recognizing the right to have accrued by user. The Civil Courts thus become the means of establishing claims that are fraudulent at the outset. When, as is often the case, the paid servants of the *zamindar*, the *patwaris* and others, are the chief offenders in this respect, it is easy to see how injuriously the landlord can be defrauded by the creation of fictitious *miliks*. The remarks on the subject of such *miliks* given in the paragraph on *mustajiris* may also be referred to.

"*Jagirs*.—In the early part of last century, owing to the inroads of marauders along the Nepal frontier, certain areas were assigned as service tenures to men who undertook the policing of the frontier. In the course of time, the need for these wardens of the border ceased to be so urgent, but the lands were not surrendered. They are still locally known as *jagirs*, and at present many of them are held not rent-free, but on payment of a nominal quit-rent, or *nazarana* as it is called. In the course of the recent settlement a detailed enquiry into these tenures was made, and it was concluded that in many cases attempts had been made formerly by

the landlords, within whose spheres of influence they lay, to assess them to rent. A compromise would seem to have been arrived at, and a fixed amount averaging about 4 annas per acre was paid under the denomination of *nazarana*. In the settlement record these men have been recorded as holding rent-free, but subject to the payment of a fixed *nazarana*.

"In some parts of the extreme north-east of Islampur *thana* between the river Mahananda and the Nepal border, a system of *sardars* and *paiks* still survives in name. They pay about 4 annas per acre as *nazarana*, but they render no service of any sort. The *sardars* are responsible for the payment of the *nazarana*, but they make no profit on their collections from the *paiks*. The area held under these conditions is inconsiderable. This system is found also in *thanas* Gopalpur and Kadwa. All these holders of service tenures have been treated as actually holding, and as entitled to hold, rent-free, subject to the payment of a fixed nominal *nazarana*, which is not a true agricultural rent.

"*Service holdings*.—Grants for services rendered to the landlord are sometimes met with, e.g., small plots of land held by *goraits*. Village artisans are also occasionally remunerated by such holdings, but they are few and unimportant. They are held by Malis, who provide artificial flowers cut out of pith during the Muharram, the village barbers, washermen and potters, and the professional drummers, whose services are in request for religious ceremonies and festive occasions.

"*Other rent-free holdings*.—A number of rent-free holdings were formerly made by great landlords for religious or charitable purposes, and are still frequently created. The most common of such tenures are those known as (1) *debottar*, i.e. religious endowments, intended for the maintenance of temples and the celebration of rites and ceremonies, as well as the support of officiating priests, and (2) *brahmottar*, or grants made for the support of Brahmans as such without regard to the performance of religious ceremonies. Under the head of *debottar* may be classed endowments especially

allotted to the service of particular manifestations of the deity, such as *sivattor, vishnuvattor, kalipuja* for the special service of Siva, Vishnu and Kali. Religious grants made by Muhammadans are known as *wakf,* varieties of which are *pirottar*, or foundations for the support of *pirs* or saints; *madadmash,* or grants for the support of pious or learned Muhammadans; and *imambara,* intended for the maintenance of a house of prayer and the celebration of ceremonies in connection with the Muharram. The only endowment of this kind calling for special notice is Mirza Muhammad Husain's Endowment, in which the Collector is trustee of certain estates, the rents of which are applied to the support of school, a *sarai* or guest-house and an *Imambara.* Both in the case of Hindu and Muhammadan endowments, the original purpose has, in some instances, been lost sight of, and the proceeds are applied, as elsewhere, to the private expenses of the trustees.

"*Miscellaneous tenures.*—Among miscellaneous tenures the following may be mentioned briefly. *Golaganj jama* means rent paid for land used for *golas* or warehouses. *Hat jama* is the rent paid by the lessee of a *hat* or market place. Leases of pasture land for grazing cattle are common. They are of two kinds—*kashchari* lands, i.e., lands which grow the long thatching grass called *kash;* and *ramnas,* which grow the excellent fodder grass called *dub,* as well as thatching grass, and short coarse grasses called *tilwa, madhua* and *birna.* There are a number of rent-paying incorporeal rights which may be most fitly described here, although they cannot be accurately defined as tenures. *Jalkar* requires no special notice, being simply a lease of fishery rights. The holder of a *jalkar,* when he is of low caste, is called a *mahaldar. Ghat jama* is the rent paid by a ferry farmer. *Bankar, phalkar* and *jama shahd* are rents paid for the exercise of forest rights in firewood, fruit and honey respectively. *Jama singhati* is a market due paid to the owner or farmer of a market for registering sales of cattle as a safeguard against the sale of stolen animals at markets. *Jama chutki* is another market due

(nominally a handful of the wares exposed for sale) given to the owner or farmer by each vendor. *Kayali jama* is the fee paid by the professional weighman of a market for the right to weigh goods on behalf of purchasers in the market. The *kayal* in his turn levied a fee equivalent to 2½ per cent of the amount weighed.

"*Landlords of the district.*—When the Permanent Settlement was effected, the district was divided as follows amongst the chief landholders:—(1) Rani Indrabati of Mohini near Kasba, the daughter of Madhu Singh, Raja of Darbhanga, was the greatest landholder of the district, holding *parganas* Sultanpur, Sripur, Fatehpur Singhia, Haveli, Katihar, Kumaripur, Garari and Nathpur (the last of which has since been transferred to Bhagalpur). (2) Raja Madhu Singh of Darbhanga was *zamindar* of Dharampur, which occupied an area of about 1,000 square miles, or one-fifth of the whole district. (3) Fakhr-ud-din Husain, the ancestor of the Khagra *zamindars*, held *pargana* Surjyapur, which is 729 square miles in area. (4) Bakaulla was *zamindar* of Badaur with an area of 284 square miles. (5) Sibnath and Gauri Nath were joint-proprietors of Tajpur, which is 197 square miles in area. (6) Dular Singh, who became one of the largest landholders in the district, was the *zamindar* of Tirakharda, which has an area of only 75 square miles. The assessment seems not to have exceeded the capabilities of the estates, as most of the larger ones have not changed hands, but still continue in the possession of the descendants of these with whom the settlement was made.

"The only large properties that have been broken up are those of Rani Indrabati, which had an area of 2,000 square miles, and the Surjyapur *pargana*. As regards the former, in 1850, Babu Pratap Singh, father of Rai Lakshmipat Singh and Rai Dhanpat Singh of Murshidabad, purchased the whole of *parganas* Haveli Purnea and Sultanpur, and about three-fourths of *parganas* Fatehpur Singhia, Sripur, Katihar and Kumaripur. The late Mr. Palmer of Purnea acquired the remainder of the four *parganas* last named, and Raja Lilanand Singh of

the Banaili Raj purchased Garari. Babu Pratap Singh subsequently (in 1859) sold Sultanpur to Mr. A. J. Forbes, the father of the present proprietors, and *pargana* Haveli Purnea to Babu Dharam Chand Lal, a banker of Purnea. As regards the latter, it was divided on the death of Fakhr-ud-din Husain between his two sons Didar Husain and Akbar Husain. The descendants of the former, who are known as the Khagra branch of the family, are still in possession of their share, but a number of *patnis* were given out by the late Nawab Saiyad Husain. Akbar Husain died childless, and his widow transferred the property to her brother, whose descendants (know as the Kishanganj branch of the family) have lost it, different shares being acquired by Nawab Lutf Ali Khan of Patna, Babu Dharam Chand Lal and his son Babu Prithi Chand Lal.

"A portion of the district is owned by families of European descent. Prominent among these are the heirs of Alexander J. Forbes, who acquired *pargana* Sultanpur and other properties, and the descendants of Mr. Palmer, who acquired much landed property as a *mustajir* or farmer, and as a *zamindar* in *pargana* Sripur. He left one daughter, who married a Mr. Downing, on whose death the property was divided between his son, Mr. Clifford Young Downing, and his daughter, the wife of Mr. Hayes, formerly a Deputy Magistrate in this district.

"Of Muhammadan landed families, the most important are the *zamindars* of Surjyapur, of which there are two branches—the Khagra branch, represented by the widow and sons of Nawab Saiyad Ata Husain, and the Kishanganj branch, represented by Saiyad Dilawar Raza. Both families claim to be descended originally from the Khagra stock, but the Kishanganj branch possessed no interest in the estate till united to the house of Khagra by marriage three generations back. The difficulty as to so ancient a family being in humble circumstances till this alliance is explained by a tradition that at some remote period their ancestor, the elder brother of the Khagra family at that time, abdicated in favour of his younger brother, from whom the present

Khagra *zamindars* trace their descent; but the story is emphatically denied by the Khagra family. According to their account, at the beginning of the 19th century the Surjyapur property was owned in equal shares by two brothers Saiyed Akbar Husain and Saiyad Didar Husain. Didar, who remained at Khagra, was the grandfather of Nawab Saiyad Ata Husain of Khagra. Akbar removed from Khagra to Kishanganj, marrying Bibi Zahurunnissa, the daughter of a petty *milikdar* of Aliganj in this district. He died childless, and his widow succeeded to the property, which she left to her brother Husain Raza, whose grandsons were Saiyad Asghar Khan Bahadur and Saiyad Dilawar Raza.

"Another family of some antiquity is that of the late Aga Saifulla Khan, who was the son of Ahmed Ali Khan and the grandson of Muhammad Ali Khan, the last of the *Nawabs* of Purnea. On his death the property passed to his niece, Bibi Kamarannissa, widow of Saiyad Raza Ali Khan Bahadur, a native of the Muzaffarnagar district in the United Provinces. The property of Bibi Kamarannissa was increased by a 4 annas 8 *gandas* share of *pargana* Badaur being given to her by Hafizunnissa, a member of the Beni Rasulpur family which formerly owned that *pargana;* on the other hand, she made over a portion of the original estate to Saiyad Asad Raza, a son of her husband by another wife.

"Among the principal Hindu *zamindars* is the Maharaja of Darbhanga, to whom the Dharampur *pargana* has descended from Raja Madhu Singh. Other important properties are those known as the Banaili and Srinagar estates, which were originally owned by Dular Singh, the *zamindar* of the sixth estate above mentioned. He had two sons Pidyanand Singh and Rudranand Singh, from the former of whom descended the Banaili branch, while the Srinagar branch sprang from Rudranand. The property of both these families is situated in Bhagalpur, Monghyr, Malda and the Santal Parganas, as well as in this district; but their homes are at Banaili, Srinagar, Champanagar and Ramnagar, adjacent villages about 13 miles north-west.

of the town of Purnea. The Banaili estate is now managed by Kalanand Singh and Krityanand Singh, sons of Raja Lilanand Singh Bahadur by Rani Sitabati of Khuskahpur. Another old family is that of Lakhraj Rai, *zamindar* of Chak Dilawari, who was esteemed the wealthiest man in the district He removed his home to Bihar in the Patna district, and his son Sukhraj Rai, inherited his property. The Maldwar estate belonged to another absentee landlord, Babu Budhinath Chaudhuri of Ramganj in the Dinajpur district, on whose death it was managed by the Court of Wards during the minority of his heirs.

'Among families owning landed property whose wealth was primarily derived from commerce are those of Pratap Singh, a banker of Purnea, and Nakched Lal, another banker of Purnea. Pratap Singh, as already mentioned, acquired an extensive property in 1850, but subsequently sold *parganas* Sultanpur and Haveli Purnea. He left two sons Dhanpat Singh and Lachmipat Singh. The estate of the former (in *pargana* Sripur) was sold for arrears of revenue in 1896 and was purchased by or for his wife Rani Mina Kumari. She has, however, little of it in *khas* possession, as it contains a number of *patnis*. Lachmipat Singh's son, Babu Chattarpat Singh, had various properties of very considerable extent, but he has lost some of them. He inherited from Babu Pratap Singh half of *pargana* Fatehpur Singhia, but sold it to Sir Jotindra Mohan Tagore of Calcutta. The rest of it is held by Mr. C. Y. Downing and Mrs. Hayes, the heirs of Mr. Palmer and his wife, who bought it jointly with Babu Pratap Singh. Babu Chattarpat Singh also sold in 1904 *pargana* Kumaripur to one Pijay Singh of Murshidabad. The son of Nackched Lal, Babu Dharam Chand Lal, steadily added to the property acquired by his father. He purchased Haveli Purnea from Babu Pratap Singh, and it now stands in the name of his wife, Musamat Bhagwanbati Chaudhrain of Purnea. She and her son, Babu Prithi Chand Lal Chaudhri, are now said to be the wealthiest resident *zamindars* of the Purnea district. They have acquired this Haveli property, *pargana*

Asja (Tauji no. 29), about 5¾ annas of *pargana* Surjyapur, and 4 annas of *pargana* Powakhali, besides smaller properties and *patnis*.

"*Landlords' staff*.—The staff of landlords in this district is much the same as in other Bihar districts. The *tahsildar* is the rent-collector and general manager for a circle of villagers, and is sometimes assisted by a *naib tahsildar*. He has under him a number of subordinates, called *srimans* and, in parts of the Srinagar estate, *mukaddams*, who collect the rents from the villagers. This duty is sometimes also discharged by the *patwari* or village accountant. The *tainath*, *gorait* and *paik* are messengers employed by the village rent-collector to summon the *ryots* to pay rent or account for non-payment. The *mandal* or *jeth-raiyat* is the village headman, who is sometimes allowed to hold land at a lower rate of rent than other cultivators, on the understanding that he uses his influence with the latter in the interests of the landlord.

"*Parganas*.—The following is a list of the *parganas* in Purnea with their areas as dealt with in Mr. Byrne's settlement and previous settlements, viz., those of Banaili and Maldwar:—

Name.	Area in square miles.
Akbarpur	17
Asja	127
Badaur	284
Bhakhi	1.50
Bhaur	·03
Burhi Gangal	17
Chak Dilawar	·38
Chhal	2
Dehat	16
Dehinagar	1
Dhaphar	11

Name.	Area in square miles.
Dharampur	964·05
Dilawarpur	9
Fatehpur Singhia	225
Garari	...
Garhi	4
Garho or Garhonda	·35
Harwat	36
Hathinda	19
Haveli	787
Kadwa	139·17
Kankjol	148
Katihar	95
Kharwa	·35
Kholra	9
Kumaripur	65
Mahinagar	·20
Maldwar	23
Matsari	2
Nathpur	2
Pawakhali	126
Rajnagar	.11
Shahpur	3
Saujunagar	17
Sripur	411·28
Sultanpur	192
Surjyapur	729
Tajpur	196·63
Tappa Lakhpura	.15
Tirakharda	75"*

History of Land Revenue Administration after 1908.

The changes that took place in the Land Revenue Administration since the year 1909 may be divided into two distinct phases, viz., the period prior and subsequent to the

*The extract has been taken verbatim from the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* published in 1911, pp. 145—165.

vesting of estates under the Land Reforms Act, 1950, i.e., 1909-10 to 1950-51 and 1951-52 to 1960.

The period between 1909-10 to 1950-51 witnessed little changes, if any, in the assessment and management of the permanently-settled estates held by the ex-intermediaries. The management of the temporarily-settled estates and *khas mahal* did, however, play their ascribed roles as a result of which the land revenue of the permanently-settled and temporarily-settled estates including those increased from Rs. 11,79,591 from 1908-09 to Rs. 12,48,216 by the end of the period 1950-51 recording thereby an increase of Rs. 68,625 over the previous sum. This increase in the land revenue including sums on account of the land rental is attributed to the management of the temporarily-settled estates whose number went on dwindling from year to year until it became 18 from 34. The shift of proprietary management of *khas mahal* of such estates was more in the larger interest of the tenantry.

The institution of *zamindari* system had outlived its utility during the decades following 1909-10 until it came into open conflict with the larger interest of the tenantry. The net income to the ex-landlords from the collection of rental from the tenants went on increasing as years passed by, but the economic condition of the tenantry, as a whole declined and rural indebtedness mounted up. The human element in the relationship of the *zamindar* and the tenant had a gradual set-back and the *zamindars* ceased worrying over the good of the tenants. The condition of the tenantry under temporarily-settled estates and under the *khas mahal* was better. The working of this institution had brought in great social inequalities and tensions which paved the way for the introduction of the Land Reforms in the year 1949 when Bihar Management of Estates and Tenure Act was passed and put into operation the same year. According to the provisions of this Act, six estates viz., (1) Nazarganj Estate, (2) Sultanpur Estate, (3) Maldowar Estate, (4) Hayes Estate, (5) Tajpur Estate and (6) Estate of Chowdhary Khalilur Rahman, were taken over under direct management by the Government in the month of January, 1950. The charge of these estates had, however, to be relinquished in the month of July, 1950, as the Act was declared *ultra vires* of the Constitution by the Hon'ble High Court of Judicature at Patna.

The matter was investigated into by the State Government and in 1950 the Bihar Land Reforms Act was passed. In accordance with the provisions of Act, nine estates having gross annual

income exceeding Rs. 50,000 were again taken over in 1951. The relevant details of such estates are as below:—

—	Date of notification.	Annual Land Revenue.
		Rs a. p.
1. Darbhanga .. .	8th November 1951	1,98,181 8 5
2. Sultanpur Estate . .	8th November 1951	57,809 4 10
3. Raja Jankinath Rai Estate	8th November 1951	44,663 12 1
4 Nirmal Kumari Estate (Chhoti Kothi).	8th November 1951	55,669 0 7
5 Nihaha Estate	8th November 1951	4,861 7 10
6 Hayes Estate .	10th November 1951	27,384 13 11
7 Raja P. C Lall Estate	10th November 1951	3,37,177 1 4
8 Maldwar Estate	10th November 1951	23,345 10 11
9 Halwasin Estate .. —	10th November 1951	21,085 5 10
		7 70,085 5 10

Gradually other estates having lesser income were notified in batches and taken over for management under the L. R. Act till the year ending 31st December, 1954. In 1955 all the remaining estates and tenures existing in the district were decided to be taken over by the Government by virtue of area notification no. 631 L. R. ZAM, dated 21st January 1955, in pursuance of which charges of all the estates and tenures were taken over in the same year except two Estates Raj Banaili for 0 8 0 and 0-3-6 *Patti* and Tagore Estate whose proprietors had instituted suits in Patna and Calcutta High Courts respectively as a result of which the State of Bihar had been restrained from taking over their possession. The suit relating to the Banaili Estate was decided in favour of the State of Bihar in the year 1958, and the charge thereof was taken in the same year accordingly. The suit in respect of Tagore Estate, however, could not be decided finally before the year 1959. On a pronouncement of the suit in favour of the State of Bihar by the Calcutta High Court the formal charge of the estate was taken over on the 6th September, 1959.

The recommendations of the States Re-organisation Commission followed by the sponsoring of the Bihar and West Bengal

Transfer of Territories Act, 1956, resulted in the transfer of a portion of this district measuring 759 square miles to West Bengal which adversely affected the rental and other allied *jamas* of this district. The details of the transfer which took effect from November, 1956 as modified by a later demarcation of boundaries were as follows:—

Serial no.	Name of revenue thana.	Name of police station.	Number of villages transferred.	Area (in square miles).	Population.
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Islampur ..	Thakurganj ..	12	336·40	14,357
		Chapra ..	124		52,858
		Islampur ..	120		57,317
2	Kishanganj ..	Kishanganj ..	286	246·79	63,743
		Goalpokhar ..	94		35,226
3	Gopalpur ..	Karandighi ..	270	149·69	47·165
		Total ..	906	732.88	270,666

The resultant loss in respect of rent and cess has been computed at Rs. 10,67,465.

Present System of Survey.

The first revenue survey was carried out in this district between 1844 and 1848. In 1887—90 a settlement was made of the Maldwar Estate, and in 1887—92 of the Srinagar Banaili Estate. Survey and Settlement operations were carried on in the remainder of the district in 1901—1908. A minor survey and settlement of the Kosi-Diara was carried on in 1923—26 which was confined to 75 square miles only consisting of 40 villages in thana Dhamdaha in the Sadar subdivision and 14 villages in thana Raniganj in the Araria subdivision. Revisional Survey and Settlement operations were conducted in the entire Purnea district during 1952—60.

So far as the present system of survey is concerned it can be safely asserted that it brought a marked improvement in the land revenue survey work than the previous survey conducted by Todarmal in 1572. From the *Ain-i-Akbari* it appears that for

the purpose of land revenue the lands were broadly divided into three classes, viz., *polaj, parauti* and *chachar* and the rent was fixed on taking into consideration the average produce of each land; and 1/3rd of the produce was taken as rent. It appears that besides these three classifications of lands, Todarmal did not take into account of the irrigational and non-irrigational facilities and other broad divisions of lands. Now before a cadastral or detailed survey is taken up, a traverse survey is done for which due notifications are issued before hand. Preliminary to the settlement it is essential to fix the boundaries of the villages. In both the stages, *khanapuri* and attestation, ample opportunities are given to the affected persons to bring out their grievances for adjudication. The actual survey done by the subordinate staff is frequently checked at the spot by gazetted officers. The village map also seems to be an innovation. Preparation of Record of Rights after all processes are done is an important feature of the Survey and Settlement Operations. The Record of Rights could be questioned in Civil Courts.

System of Assessment and Collection.

Broadly speaking the system of assessment of the land revenue differs between the permanently-settled estates and temporarily-settled estates. In the Survey and in Settlement Operations the status of the different tenancies, viz., lands held by proprietors, cultivated by tenure-holders, *raiyats* at fixed rates, non-occupancy and *diara raiyats*, rent-free holders, under-*raiyats* with occupancy rights and others has to be taken into account. The fertility of the soil again is a factor in assessing land revenue. Over and above *rasum* or custom vis-a-vis the status of the tenantry has to be considered. Purnea was a permanently-settled estate and the question of assessing land revenue did not arise during the Settlement Operation of 1901—1908.

The total revenue demand of the district according to the last Survey and Settlement Operations Report (1901—1908) was as follows*:—

Total no. of estate		Current revenue demand.
		Rs.
(a) Permanently-settled ..	1,661	11,72,863
(b) Temporarily-settled ..	34	1,475
(c) Held direct by Government	17	5,253
	1,712	11,79,591

*Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the District of Purnea (1901—1908, pp. 80-81).

The table below will show some interesting details of the incidence of revenue in the North Bihar, in the permanently-settled areas:—

District.		Area in sq. miles.	Revenue in rupees.	Incidence per acre.	Present valuation for assessment of census.
1		2	3	4	5
				A. P.	Rs.
Darbhanga	..	3,348	7,88,301	5 10	83,27,383
Muzaffarpur	..	3,033	9,65,128	7 11	64,28,296
Saran	..	2,674	12,63,924	11 9	65,39,338
Champaran	..	3,531	5,15,553	3 7	30,37,873
Monghyr	..	3,769	7,76,776	5 1	51,78,326
Purnea	..	4,742	11,72,863	6 2	43,83,196

From the above statement it will appear that the total revenue of the permanently-settled estates of the district was Rs. 11,72,863 as against the total gross rental of Rs. 43,83,196. The abolition of *zamindaris* had done away with the age-old system of land revenue which the ex-intermediaries had to pay to Government. After the passing of the Bihar Land Reforms Act. 1950 the interests and liabilities of the ex-intermediaries vested in the Government.

It is understood that in the present Survey and Settlement Operations of 1952—60, the question of assessment of rent of only unassessed holdings had been taken into account. A large number of *bataidars* whose occupancy rights had been assured under the Bihar Tenancy Second Amendment Act, 1955 have been recorded. Unassessed lands have been assessed to rental under section 109 C of the Bihar Tenancy Act. The Block Development Officers and *Anchal Adhikaris* have been vested with powers under sections 5—7 of the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950 for fixation of rents on *kabil-lagan* lands. The report of the last Survey and Settlement Operations (1952—60) has not yet been published.

In the present set-up after *zamindari* has been abolished the method of collection of rents and cesses is on the pattern of the rent collection system in Government *khas mahal* estates Circulars and Government orders have been issued from time to

time to control this system. The estates and tenures which vested in the State under the provisions of the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950 and the management of the *khas mahal* estates merged into the Land Reforms Establishment, vide Government letter no. 4457-L.R., dated the 23rd August, 1955.

So far as management in the present set-up is concerned the district has been divided into 38 *anchals* and circles. These *anchals* and circles are the decentralised units for revenue administration. The Block Development Officers and Circle Officers have been entrusted with the collection of land revenue in their respective jurisdiction. Each circle is subdivided into *halkas* or fiscal units. The total number of *halkas* now comes to 373. Each *halka* is under the charge of a *Karamchari* who is assisted by a *tahsil* peon. The collection of rent is directly made by the *Karamcharis* who after payments issued receipts to tenants. The work of the *Karamcharis* is supervised by the Circle Inspectors, Circle Officers and *Anchal Adhikaris* or *Anchal* Officers. In each subdivision there is a Deputy Collector of Land Reforms and Development to supervise the work of the Circle Officers or the *Anchal Adhikaris*. The *Anchal* Officer is always a gazetted officer. The Additional Collector with his headquarters at Purnea is the administrative head of the Land Revenue Administration at the district level who assists the Collector in the revenue administration of the district. The Additional Collector is under the administrative control of the District Magistrate and Collector.

Income from Land Revenue and Special Cesses.

As already mentioned after the vesting of estates under the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950, there has been a radical change in the income of the State as also in the methods of its collection. Prior to the Land Reforms, Government income from the estate mainly depended on land revenue. Government were not concerned with the income from the tenants at all which were being realised and appropriated by the landlords concerned. The land revenue of Purnea district as it stood in the year 1950-51, i.e., prior to the abolition of *zamindaris* was Rs. 12,48,216 only. After the enforcement of the Land Reforms Act, all intermediaries vested in Government and the previous institutions and working of the land revenue collection system were abolished and the State Government started direct collection of rent from the tenants, and thus the land revenue ultimately took the shape of rent. Many of the landlords refused to make over their books and rent-rolls. In absence of proper jamabandis no correct

demand could be ascertained. It remained in a fluid condition and as a result there have been much differences in the demand of one year with the demand of the other.

Now that the Survey and Settlement Operations have been finalised, it is expected that tthe rental demand of the district will be correctly ascertained. There are some other difficulties in the way. There are large number of *kabil lagan khatas* in the district besides *bakast* lands with the ex-intermediaries the rent of which has yet to be fixed. They were not assessed before and the landlords enjoyed them and particularly the *bakast* lands.

Cess.—Conditions for the fixation of special cesses, if any, do not exist in the district. Only Road Cess has been assessed and realised in this district. According to the old methods of realisation of cess the periodical annual valuation of the district was fixed in Cess Revaluation Operations started for the purpose and cess was assessed touziwise in accordance with the provisions of the Cess Act. According to the last Cess Revaluation the amount of annual cess was assessed at Rs. 9,47,646. The entire amount of cess collection used to be credited to the District Fund which formed the main income of the District Board and Local Boards. The system of collection of cess was that the landlords used to collect cess at the rate of one anna per rupee from the tenants, but they deposited the entire amount of cess assessed for their estates along with land revenue in Government Treasury.

Now that all intermediaries have been abolished, cess is collected from the tenants direct at one anna per rupee and an annual advance is given to the District Board in lieu of cess.

LAND REVENUE DEMANDS AT SUCCESSIVE SETTLEMENT.

The demands fixed on the conclusion of the different Survey and Settlement Operations undertaken in the district till 1908-09, have been already indicated in detail in the *Bengal District Gazetteer for the District of Purnea.* After this period, no settlement operations as such were undertaken in this district which could have brought about any alteration in the Land Revenue Demand.

The Kosi *diara survey* (1923—1926) was designed at fixation of the rental *jamas* of the diluviated areas as detailed at page 35 of the *Final Reports on the Kosi Diara Survey Settlement Operation* and accordingly it did not bring about any alteration in the Land Revenue Demand. The last Revisional Survey was taken up in this district during 1952—60. With the final publication of the Records-of-rights in the year 1958, the rental *jamas* of the

different categories of lands have been assessed at the following figures:—

Number of khatas surveyed.	Number of plots surveyed.	Total settled rent (in rupees.)	Rent fixed for *kabillagan* land and *bataidary* u/s 109C of the B.T. Act (in rupees.)	Total (in rupees.)
1	2	3	4	5
10,09,286	45,80,258	41,58,350·79	3,90,450·48	45,48,801·27

The demand is still fluid and is expected to crystallise only after the rental of the remaining *kabillagan* lands and lands to the ex-intermediaries u/s. 5, 6 and 7 of the B. L. R. Act, 1950, are finally fixed.

*The following statement shows demand and collection of rent, cess, education cess and miscellaneous from 1951-1952 to 1959-60:—

RENT.

Year.	Demand (in rupees.)			Collection (in rupees.)			Remarks.
	Arrear.	Current.	Total.	Arrear.	Current.	Total.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1951-52 / 1952-53	..	31,31,855	31,31,855	13,55,192	..	13,55,192	
1953-54	17,76,663	24,75,733	42,52,396	22,77,011	..	22,77,011	
1954-55	20,21,112	25,12,473	45,33,585	11,71,876	12,73,725	24,45,601	
1955-56	28,72,312	38,35,820	67,08,132	17,79,403	36,09,936	47,80,339	
1956-57	18,41,786	33,08,609	52,40,895	11,10,665	23,31,370	34,42,035	
1957-58	21,69,017	35,47,400	57,16,417	2,59,981	6,34,407	8,94,388	
1958-59	52,41,860	36,88,424	89,30,284	39,63,828	17,30,072	56,93,900	
1959-60	48,93,495	45,30,773	94,24,268	30,51,301	18,18,067	48,69,368	
1960-61	74,67,861	49,98,033	1,24,65,894	39,28,009	23,49,094	62,771	

*Figures supplied from the Collector's office.

ROAD CESS.

Year.	Demand (in rupees.)			Collection (in rupees.)			Remarks.
	Arrear.	Current.	Total.	Arrear.	Current.	Total.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1951-52 } 1952-53	..	5,33,832	5,33,832	2,38,477	..	2,38,477	
1953-54	2,95,255	4,92,630	7,87.985	4,21,492	..	4,21,492	
1954-55	5,10,025	5,35,138	10,45,163	2,56,924	2,12,249	4,69,173	
1955-56	6,18,924	3,81,037	9,99,961	2,47,943	2,65,912	5,13,855	
1956-57	2,52,085	3,21,992	5,74,077	1,22,584	2,08,665	3,31,249	
1957-58	2,61,374	3,27,928	5,89,302	22,972	54,152	77,124	
1958-59	5,17,781	2,94,012	8,11,793	3,34,650	1,08,933	4,43,583	
1959-60	4,31,869	2,89,966	7,21,835	2,15,489	1,19,741	3,35,230	
1960-61	5,38,824	3,11,822	8,50,646	2,73,876	1,45,097	4,18,973	
EDUCATION CESS.							
			Education cess levied in the district, vide Government Notification no. 5775, dated the 17th November 1959 published in *Bihar Gazette* part II, dated the 2nd December 1959 at page 3688.				
1960-61	2,77,148	3,07,805	5,84,953	1,44,720	1,41,401	2,86,121	
MISCELLANEOUS.							
1951-52	..	..	..	..	..	..	
1952-53	..	..	..	..	..	..	
1953-54	..	..	..	..	..	..	
1954-55	89,256	5,59,426	6,48,682	40,437	4,79,153	5,19,590	
1955-56	1,50,621	11,95,201	13,45,822	85,610	10,49,929	11,35,539	
1956-57	2,04,488	11,88,690	13,53,178	54,596	10,43,453	10,98,049	
1957-58	2,98,710	11,09,902	14,08,612	45,262	8,26,578	8,71,840	
1958-59	5,27,264	10,66,523	15,93,787	98,646	8,91,147	9,89,793	
1959-60	6,31,052	11,33,092	17,64,144	57,574	10,19,474	10,77,048	
1960-61	7,07,280	11,53,487	18,60,767	58,635	10,67,626	11,26,261	

Land Reforms.

The period between 1793 to 1950, i.e., from the passing of the Permanent Settlement to the abolition of *zamindari* and passing of the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950 may be broadly divided into two stages, i.e., (*i*) from 1793 to 1900 and (*ii*) from 1900 to 1950.

The Permanent Settlement of Lord Cornwallis created a class known as *zamindars* or landlords. The firm consolidation of the British Empire brought in its train, peace and tranquility

in general. Prior to Permanent Settlement land revenue was generally fixed at 9/10th of the gross assets but after the Permanent Settlement it ultimately fell to 1/10th or even 1/11th of the total assets of each estate. The system brought in an assured land revenue to the State but resulted in the emergence of class of landlords who became more or less parasitic in the course of time and paid little heed to the prosperity of the tenantry. This position continued till the end of the nineteenth century.

The first part of the twentieth century witnessed a remarkable self-consciousness in the masses due to spread of education, liberal ideas and growth of political aspirations. There was a wave of unrest against the tyranny of the *zamindars* and the relations between the landlords and the tenants became strained. The landlords neglected their obligations and remained satisfied with realisation of rent only. The Kisan Sabha agitation launched by Swami Sahjanand Saraswati and the All India National Congress had its influence on the tenantry. There was a movement against the landlords and the large cultivators. This movement was concentrated in certain pockets of the district. As a palliative measure the British Government enacted several measures for the protection of the interests of the tenants. Rent reduction and *bakast* restoration operations, cess revaluation measures, amendments to the Bihar Tenancy Act, commutation of rent, ets., were some such measures. Some of these measures did meet a few of the inequities such as the high rates of rent fixed as a result of commutation proceedings or mutual agreement between the landlords and the *raiyats* during the period of the First World War, etc. The prices had fallen after 1930 and the tenants were much affected. In some areas the law and order situation even deteriorated due to tense situation between the landlords and the tenants. The Government no doubt made attempts to ease the tension by reducing rents which had been fixed rather arbitrarily during the period 1914 to 1936. Certain amendments were introduced in the tenancy laws so that in case of arrears of rent only such portions of the holding could be sold as would be sufficient to liquidate the arrears and in no case the *raiyat* would be deprived of his entire holding. Certain types of cumbersome produce rent and *abwabs* or illegal realisations along with rental were declared illegal. With a view to settle the disputes between the landlord and the tenants due to forceful possession of *bakast* land the Government passed the Bihar Bakast Dispute Settlement Act (Act XIII of 1947) which provided for the settlement of the disputes by setting up a Bakast Dispute Settlement Board in each case. The Rent Reduction

Operations brought down appreciably the enhanced rent to the great satisfaction of the tenant. The new insertion of section 48E in the Bihar Tenancy Act provided for restroration of lands to under-raiyat unlawfully ejected.

But these measures could not fully satisfy the tenants completely. The leftist party especially the Kisan Sabha and the All-India National Congress as well as the British Government came to the conclusion that sooner or later the problem could only be solved by the total abolition of *zamindari* system.

As early as in 1938 the Government of Bengal set up a Land Revenue Commission with Sir Henery Floude as Chairman. The Commission recommended for the abolition of the *zamindari* system. Public opinion was also hardening in favour of the abolition of the intermediary class. The Congress election manifesto issued in 1945, put the abolition of intermediaries in land as one of the principal items of economic reform which should be given top priority to ameliorate the economic condition of the tenants. Owing to the short spell of rule of the first Congress Ministry (1937) not much could be done in this matter.

After the formation of the Second Congress Ministry in Bihar in 1946 the State Government took several preliminary measures for the abolition of the *zamindari* system. A good deal of discussion was made in the legislatures, press and the platform. The then Member of Board of Revenue of Bihar, Mr. Y. A. Godbole, I.C.S., and the then Commissioner, Chotanagpur division Mr. J. W. Houlton, I.C.S., who had intimate experience and knowledge of land revenue administration due to their long tenures of office in the State, were consulted. As a result of all the discussions a memorandum was prepared on the lines of which the Bihar Land Reforms Act was subsequently to be drafted. The nutshell of the memorandum was as follows:—

> "It is the policy of Government in the interest of the cultivators of the soil and for purposes general, material and social advancement of the province to remove all intermediaries between Government and the cultivators who hold a *raiyati* interest. For this reason Government have decided to do away with the existing landlords."

Ultimately after passing through various hurdles, the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950 was passed and after the passing of this Act the tiller of the soil came into direct contact with the Government. The Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950 is a great landmark in

the revenue history of the State because it did away with the age-old system of landlordism and sought to remove the causes of the tension between the landlords and the tenants. It is too early to appraise how the new system has worked.

COMPENSATION.

Section 32 of the Bihar Land Reforms Act has made provision to pay compensation to ex-intermediaries and tenure-holders. Since the Government of Bihar was financially not in a position to pay the final compensation within a short period provisions were made under section 33 of the same Act for making *ad-interim* payments to ex-landlords. The number of outgoing *zamindars* and intermediaries in Purnea district was 38,837. A sum of Rs. 38,29,288 had been paid to ex-*zamindars* and intermediaries towards *ad-interim* compensation under section 33 of the Bihar Land Reforms Act. It has not so far been possible to make final compensation as necessary verification of particulars furnished by ex-landlords could not be finalised. Government have, therefore, made provision for payment of 50 per cent of compensation to the outgoing *zamindars* and intermediaries pending finalisation and assessment rolls in pursuance of Bihar Land Reforms Amendment Act of 1959 and accordingly compensation bonds to the value of Rs. 21,63,100 have been indented for delivery to them. It is expected within a period of two or three years the assessment of final compensation payable to them will be completed.

AGRARIAN MOVEMENTS OF EARLY TIMES.

The indigo planters who came in the wake of the British occupation in the district created a new relation between the indigo planters and the tenants From the old records and authentic books like the *Account of Purnea* by Francis Buchanan it appears that in early times the relation between the indigo planters and the *raiyats* was on the whole satisfactory.

Unlike the other districts of North Bihar where the history of the indigo planters vis-a vis the *raiyats* offers one of the unfortunate and troublesome episode in the annals of Bihar during the last quarter of the 19th century, the history of the indigo planters in Purnea had a somewhat different tale.* From Byrne's *Survey and Settlement Report* it appears that later on the cordial relations between the indigo planters and raiyats had become strained and an anti-indigo movement was started at village Bhawanipur Rajdham in *thana* Dhamdaha. This anti-indigo

*See "Memoris of a Bengal Civilian" by John Beames (1961). John Beames was once Collector of Champaran and Purnea, two indigo districts in Bihar.

movement was indirectly an attack on Darbhanga Raj who had given a lease of a village to indigo planters for indigo cultivation. When the term of the lease was drawing to a close, a movement was started against growing indigo, apparently in order to prevent the firm securing renewal of the lease. This movement became apparently serious when Darbhanga Raj itself demanded an enhancement of rents as well as continuation of cultivation of indigo. But after a short time this anti-indigo movement came to a close.

As stated before the Kisan Sabha movement launched by Swami Sahajanand Sarswati stirred the farmers of Purnea against arbitrary enhancement of rents and against the prevalence of various types of *abwabs*. Throughout the Kisan agitation movement the Kisan Sabha also found full co-operation from the All-India National Congress who also espoused the cause of the farmers against their landlords. The passing of the Land Reforms Act and in consequent of the abolition of the *zamindari* system brought to a close the age-old agrarian agitation.

Bhoodan Movement.

Bhoodan Movement has been sponsored by Acharya Vinoba Bhave, a disciple of Mahatma Gandhi. It was widely realised that the abolition of the *zamindari* system only benefited and offered manifold privileges to peasantry but it did not bring any change in the condition of the vast number of landless labourers. Acharya Vinoba Bhave who is a staunch supporter of non-violence wants to solve the economic inequalities in the country through the method of *Ahimsa*. For this purpose he started the *Bhoodan* or land gift movement in the country which had begun from the village Telingana in Hyderabad in 1950. It is purely a voluntary movement where an appeal is made to nobler instinct of land-owners to donate land which would ultimately be distributed to landless labourers. Acharya Vinoba Bhave has his own band of workers. The movement in Purnea is being carried on by the *Sarvodaya Ashram* at Ranipatra a village in the neighbourhood of Purnea. The details of this *Ashram* have been discussed separately.

The Bhoodan Movement has also received support from some of the political parties and the State Government of Bihar. Legislative measures have been taken and executive instructions issued by the Government for the proper allotment and management of the donated lands. The donated land is distributed by the Bhoodan Committee.

The area donated and distributed to tenants represent details up to March, 1961.

	A.	D.
1. Total area of land donated	88,227	71½
2. No. of donors—26,303 persons.		
3. Total area in which confirmation orders passed ...	50,043	93
4. Total area distributed to Bhoodan tenants ...	25,732	45
5. Total number of Bhoodan tenants to whom lands have been distributed—15,101 persons.		
6. Amounts of Loans advanced and subsidy given to Bhoodan tenants—		

	Rs.
(*a*) Agriculturists' loan ..	45,292
(*b*) Subsidy	1,34,280
(*c*) Number of Bhoodan families resettled—1,234.	

The donated land is settled to landless labourers on token of authority certificate called "*Praman Patras*" on behalf of the Bhoodan Committee. During the recent Survey and Settlement Operation, however, of which the records-of-rights had been published in 1958, *Bhoodan* settlees could not get themselves recorded against the lands distributed to them and other persons got themselves recorded as having "*Gasbankabja*" over the land. The *danpatras*, i.e., the deed of donations have been simply found to mention the area of the land donated and the number of plots and *khatas* was not mentioned in them. These omissions in the *danpatras* have created difficulties at the time of the confirmation of the *danpatras*. The Bhoodan Movement in Purnea district so far has not achieved appreciable progress. During the present tour of Sri Acharya Binoba Bhave from 31st January, 1961 to 10th February, 1961 in Purnea district, he had asked the land-owners to donate at the rate of 1 *katha* per *bigha* of land and to distribute the donated land themselves among the landless people, thus obviating the gap between the donations and the actual possessions of the donees.

The other items of land reforms like ceiling of lands, consolidation of lands, etc., have not yet been implemented.

RURAL WAGES AND THE CONDITION OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS.

The percentage of cultivating labourers to the total agricultural population in the district of Purnea is about more than 25 per cent or they form about one-fourth of the total population. Unlike the other districts of North Bihar the problem of agricultural labourers in Purnea is quite peculiar. As has been mentioned elsewhere the paddy crops of Purnea might not be cut if labourers from other districts do not come to Purnea. The local labourers are rather lethargic and have an allergy to work. The local labourers, it is said, prefer to remain half starved than to work to the full of their capacity. The bad climate may be partially responsible. The Santhals and Sershabadia Muslims who are distributed in many parts of the district work on their own fields or lands held in *batai*. The opportunity for work throughout the year for agricultural labourers in Purnea district is quite satisfactory.

The local public depend on imported labour recruited from the districts of Saharsa, Saran, North Monghyr and Darbhanga. They come in large numbers during the sowing season of jute and paddy and also during the harvesting season. They find sufficient employment in the rural area and earn daily wages ranging from Rs. 1-4-0 to Rs. 1-12-0. During the harvesting season of winter paddy and jute they sometimes get one meal over and above their daily wages, especially in Kishanganj subdivision and some *thanas* of Sadar subdivision.

The wages of unskilled labourers vary from Rs. 1-8-0 to Rs. 2 in rice and oil mills, flour mills and building works. The average earnings of masons vary from Rs. 2-8-0 to Rs. 3-8-0 per day. The condition of labour class is, on the whole, satisfactory.

CHAPTER XII.

LAW, ORDER AND JUSTICE.

INCIDENCE OF CRIME.

The geographical situation of the district as well as the character of the people is responsible for high incidence of crime in this district. The district was till recently notorious for its malaria which sapped the vitality of the people to such an extent as to make them lethargic, incapable of doing hard work and resisting any aggression on the part of criminals. Damp climate, sandy soil and swamps leading to economic poverty is one of the reasons encouraging criminality. After committing crimes the criminals have safer areas to take shelter in. The proximity of Nepal *terai* in which bad characters easily find refuge also encourage the criminals to commit crime in the district of Purnea. After committing crime they run away to the *terai* areas of Nepal which is full of forest. Moreover as the district was comparatively sparsely populated and land was plentiful, they had to engage sturdier people from areas of physically stronger and more adventurous people to carry on work connected with agriculture. Some of these emigrants and seasonal labourers are of criminal inclinations and are the cause of most of the criminal cases.

Shershabadias, a class of migrant Muslims from Maldah side are usually taken to be fearless people who would not refrain from committing even murder if necessary. Usually they settled down on the side of the rivers and there are large colonies of Shershabadias at Manihari and Katihar and other areas. They take lands from others but usually would not pay any rent, but if any pressure is put on them they migrate *en-masse* elsewhere. They are excellent farmers for reclaiming lands and they are good cultivators. The portion of Kishanganj subdivision which has now gone to West Bengal has got a large number of Shershabadias.

Another itinerant class of common criminals are the Nuts and Gulgulias. Usually they move from place to place with their families, cattle and livestock normally consisting of dogs and poultry. Previously they were escorted by village *Choukidars* and they had to obtain permits from the authorities for their movement. Their groups were known by the name of their *Sardars*. They had to be registered under Criminal Tribals Act. No registration under C. T. Act is required for them now. They were associated with petty crimes.

Purnea district used to have frequent visits from what were known as *Irani* gangs consisting of parties of men, women and children. These gangs were associated with both petty and henious crimes and were under close surveillance.

This district has got the largest number of *melas* in the State of Bihar. In these *melas* people from different parts of India congregate. The visitors also include people of criminal proclivities with the result that the incidence of crime goes up. Cases of cheating, gambling, theft of livestock, molestation, kidnapping of women, pick pocketing, petty theft, theft with murder, smuggling and road dacoities are very common.

Crime in *mela* areas is now to some extent ascribed to the rickshow-pullers and other casual emigrants at the time of the cutting of the crops or at *mela* time. Various anti-social elements usually take advantage of the *melas*. In order to attract collection of people, prostitutes were allowed to visit the *melas* and stay in the *mela* ground. Now prostitutes are being prevented from visiting the *melas*.

The district borders Nepal and West Bengal. The jungles and terrains at the foot-hills of Nepal commonly known as *terai* offers a good refuge for criminals. After committing offences in this district criminals take shelter in the *terai*. Criminals from Nepal also come down to the villages on the border of Purnea district, commit crimes and run away to Nepal. Extradition process takes a long time and helps the criminals indirectly. Nepali *ganja, bhang,* opium and Nepali liquor are also smuggled into India from Nepal. Till recently this district was on the border of East Pakistan as well and afforded opportunities for smuggling of goods without paying customs.

Indian coins had a very good market in Pakistan and East Pakistanis exchange Pak coins with Indian coins on 120:100 ratio against the legal ratio of 65:100. Cattle were in great demand in Pakistan a few years before and cattle lifting was a very common offence in areas of this district which bordered East Pakistan. Criminals residing on either side of the country had a good opportunity of committing crimes.

A few years before there was a very high incidence of dacoity in Pak-border areas of this district and the situation was brought under control after careful guarding of the border after mobilising Police Force and Bihar Military Police personnels.

With the rapid increase in the population of the district partially due to the immigration of Shershabadias especially from

Malda district in West Bengal, land has become scarce and the *per capita* holding of land had decreased to a great extent. The land has usually low productivity because of sandy soil and has decreased the *per capita* production of foodgrains and cash crops. Due to the low yield of the crops the people are becoming poorer and poverty often inspires criminal tendency. The incidence of road accidents has gone up in the recent years. Due to the Kosi project and good roads the number of buses, trucks and other types of vehicles has increased tremendously and inexperienced men have managed to get driving licences. Rash and negligent driving often leads to accidents.

CRIME STATISTICS.

Crimes under different heads for the years 1955—60 are given below :—

Year.	Murder.	Dacoity.	Robbery.	Burglary.	Theft.	Riot.	Swindling.	Kidnapping.	Rape.	Adultery.	Traffic Accidents.	B.L. cases.		Cattle theft.	Smuggling cases.	Gang cases.
												109 Cr.P.C.	110 Cr.P.C.			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1955	22	140	60	1,068	616	128	9	24	11	12	52	172	50	97	16	..
1956	33	80	57	1,008	708	144	3	20	13	13	50	150	42	131	20	..
1957	36	152	77	1,525	1.017	142	2	21	7	11	64	184	39	119	20	..
1958	33	70	65	1,387	1,106	113	15	17	18	12	74	327	22	145	26	..
1959	37	69	51	1.548	1,178	123	26	42	13	14	89	228	19	136	27	..
1960 up to September.	39	54	49	1,283	960	122	16	29	13	11	75	147	26	34	30	..

The following figures have been collected from the Police Office showing crimes from other angles :—

Year.	Total number of cognizable cases.	Cases charge-sheeted.	Cases convicted.	Cases acquitted.
1	2	3	4	5
1947	2,727	703	388	325
1948	2,747	700	399	300
1949	2,499	694	347	347
1950	2,719	755	387	368
1951	3,389	848	465	383
1952	3,305	869	469	400
1953	3,174	944	463	486
1954	3,045	858	417	441
1955	3,174	915	508	407
1956	3,295	907	431	476

The figures give a picture of crime of certain types. It may be observed that crimes like murder, robbery, burglary, theft and riot are quite common in this district. There has been an upward movement for murder although dacoity seems to be somewhat controlled since 1957. The reason is not far to seek. Murder is committed more on sudden provocation and human nature has not altered much so far as this type of crime is concerned which is difficult to be controlled. There were 152 cases of dacoities in 1957 as against 140 in 1955 while in 1956 the number was only 80 From 1958 there has been a lower incidence of dacoities. The incidence of robbery has more or less been at the same level. Burglary statistics indicate an intriguing picture From 1955 to 1960 there has been quite a violent fluctuation of the figures under this type of crime. The pattern under theft, riot, adultery remains more or less the same. Gangs of swindlers often come to this district and operate singly or collectively and that is the reason why the figures under swindling show wide fluctuation. The number of kidnapping cases went to 42 in 1959 as against 17 in 1958. It is a notorious fact that there is an allergy to report under kidnapping, rape and adultery The number of traffic accidents has gone up by about 25 per cent in 1960 in comparison to the reported cases of 1955.

Theft of livestock is a very common crime in Purnea district and the fact of Purnea being on the border of West Bengal and Nepal is an additional cause for such crimes. The same fact also explains the uncontrolled level under smuggling

Proceedings under sections 109 and 110 Cr P C are for preventing crimes This district is notorious for such proceedings and their number is one of the largest in the State

The number of cognizable cases comes to about three thousands a year. Of these about 25 per cent only were charge-sheeted and many cases ended in acquittal. These figures show that the number of frivolous reports is very large as compared with the number of convictions. Evidently personal reasons play a big part in concocting such cases.

ORGANISATION OF POLICE FORCE AND REGULAR POLICE

The sanctioned strength of Police Force during the year 1960 of this district was one Superintendent of Police, one Additional Superintendent of Police, four Deputy Superintendents of Police, nine Inspectors, one Reserve Sergeant Major, two Sergeants, two Jamadars, sixty-one Sub-Inspectors, sixty-eight Assistant Sub-Inspectors, forty Havildars and 965 constables.

The Superintendent of Police is the head of the Police Administration of this district who is assisted by an Additional Superintendent of Police and four Deputy Superintendents of Police. There are twentyeight police-stations distributed as follows:—

Purnea Sadar subdivision—Purnea, Kasba, Khazanchihat, Amour, Baisi, Dhamdaha, Rupauli and Banmanki.

Katihar subdivision—Katihar, Korha, Barari, Kadwa, Barsoi, Azamnagar, Manihari

Kishanganj subdivision—Kishanganj, Bahadurganj, Dighal bank, Terahagachh, Thakurganj, Pothia and Balrampur.

Araria subdivision—Araria, Palasi, Sikti, Forbesganj, Narpatganj and Raniganj. There are also seven out-posts in the rural areas and seven town out-posts.

The district has been further subdivided into eight circles consisting of several police *thanas* each. Each circle is under a Circle Inspector. Each police-station is placed under a Sub-Inspector of Police. Each of the out-posts whether rural or urban is under the direct control of the officer-in-charge of the police-station concerned and is placed in charge of an Assistant Sub-Inspector. For the rural areas there are 405 *Dafadars* and 2,600 *Chaukidars* in this district.

Originally during British regime these were only the regular Police Force mentioned above, but since India attained independence there have been certain additions in the form of—

(1) *Anchal* Force,

(2) Home Guards, and

(3) Village Resistance Group.

(1) *Anchal Force*.—This force was organised in the year 1956, only for the purpose of guarding and escorting Government revenue entrusted to the Block Development Officer. The strength of the force is as noted below:—

One Sub-Inspector, two Assistant Sub-Inspectors, one Sergeant, one Jamadar, 30 Havildars and 207 Constables. This force will naturally increase with the multiplication of the blocks.

(2) *Home Guards.*—This force was organised in 1948 with a view to help the administration in various aspects especially the Police Department for patrolling the crime-affected areas and also the prevention and maintenance of law and order. Their services may be requisitioned in emergencies like strikes in the labour area. The strength of the force is as noted below.—

One Battalion Commander, one Battalion Adjutant, six Company Commanders, one Junior Havildar Clerk, three Havildar Clerks, three Orderlies, nine P. Commanders, 27 Section leaders and 238 Constables They act as auxiliary to the Police Force and are trained, equipped and armed under the Superintendent of Police

(3) *Village Resistance Group*—This group has specially been formed in the villages with a view to cope with the increasing tendency of various types of crimes in the locality. In every village there is a representative of the Village Resistance Group who becomes the members of the *Thana* Committee The officer-in-charge of the police station acts as the advisor to the committee.

Anti-Smuggling Force—This force has been constituted for the prevention of smuggling It consists of four Company Commandants, one in charge of each of the four subdivisions, two Company Commanders, two Jamadars (Home Guard) and twelve Sepoys (Home Guard) have been posted at Dengraha and Kishanganj check-posts for anti-smuggling duties under the control of one Sub-Inspector and one Inspector.

District Crime Branch.—The strength of the branch is as below.—

One Inspector, two Sub-Inspectors, two Writer Constables and one Constable. They are plain dressed police officers whose main duty is to trace criminals and help the ordinary police force in investigation and crime control work.

Radio and Wireless Stations.—There are nine wireless stations in this district. All the eight circles have got one wireless station each and the headquarters station is only meant for controlling the messages from other districts.

According to the recent policy of the Government, the boundary of a police-station and that of the Anchal-*cum*-Development Block will be co-terminus. This district has been divided into 38 blocks and ultimately there will be 38 police-stations in a period of about a couple of years.

Railway Police.—For the working of the Railway Police, Purnea district is under the Superintendent of Police, Railway Police, N. E. Railway with headquarters at Muzaffarpur.

Prohibition Squad.—The unit of Prohibition Squad under the Excise Department has to be vigilant as Nepali *ganja* is commonly smuggled through the borders.

BIHAR MILITARY POLICE UNIT AT KATIHAR.

The 7th Battalion of the Bihar Military Police was started at Katihar on 1st December 1949 with a strength of Commandant-1, Assistant Commandant-1, Wing Commanders-2, Subedar Major-1, Subedars-10, Jamadars-16, Havildars-20, W/Naiks-11, Naiks-27, L/Naiks-27, Sepoys including drivers-979 and contingent menials-75.

This is a reserve force which is kept ready for sudden emergencies through extensive training throughout the year.

At first practically the entire Battalion was deployed in the Indo-Pak border in Kishanganj subdivision for border security duties. The Battalion was re-called to Katihar after the re-organisation of the States when the border area went to West Bengal.

Since then the Battalion has been performing emergency duties in and outside the State from time to time.

Officers and men are deputed for anti crime patrolling to the districts to supplement the district police.

The Battalion has returned in 1960 from a hazardous and strenuous seven months' deputation from Manipur in North Eastern Frontier Agency where it earned a very good name for great sincerity and devotion to duty under extremely difficult circumstances.

PANCHAYAT ADALATS.

The judicial role of the *Gram Panchayats* has been described in the text on Local Self-Government. It may, however, be repeated here that the *Gram Panchayats* were established to bring the disposal of justice to the litigants as near the doors as possible and at the cheapest cost. Lawyers are not allowed and the Judges consist of the co-villagers who are commissioned to bring about as many compromises as possible. It was thought that the witnesses would be less inclined to depose incorrectly in a *Panchayat* Court. It was also expected that the proper functioning of the *Panchayat* Courts would ease the congestion of the cases in the Court of the Magistrates.

The *Gram Kutchery*, the Judiciary of the *Gram Panchayats* is headed by the *Sarpanch* who is elected by adult suffrage. He is vested with the power of a third class magistrate. He is also vested with civil powers to dispose of petty suits. He can try both civil and criminal cases of simple nature. In trial of cases he is assisted by a panel of *Panches* including one *Panch* each nominated by the contestants. They all derive their powers under a Statutory Act. *Gram Sevak*, the paid employee of the *Gram Panchayats* known, also acts as a Bench Clerk. The statement below gives the statistics of the working of the *Gram Kutcheries* from 1951-52 to 1959-60:—

Year.	Number of notified Gram Panchayat.	Number of Gram Kutchery.	Number of cases and suits instituted.		Number of cases and suits disposed.		Number of cases and suits compromised.	
			Cases.	Suits.	Cases.	Suits.	Cases.	Suits.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1951-52	..	..	177	81	157	53	152 (85.8%)	32 (39 5%)
1952-53	114	39	805	172	682	144	546 (67·7%)	81 (47 1%)
1953-54	152	52	1,476	503	1,506	401	1,261 (67 2%)	245 (44 9%)
1954-55	323	188	2,222	637	1,698	497	1,211 (54·5%)	225 (35·3%)
1955-56	328	296	4,279	1,192	3,653	894	2,620 (61·2%)	173 (14·0%)
1956-57	297	201	5 186 (338)	1,658 (135)	4,550	1,451	2 974 (57 9%)	536 (32 3%)
1957-58	297	254	5,027	1,839	4,631	1,622	2,705 (53 8%)	539 (29 1%)
1958-59	469	350	6.147 (747)	2,077 (188)	5,667	1,878	3,396 (55·4%)	594 (28·4%)
1959-60	618	351	3,665 (1,029)	1,549 (305)	3,807	1,681	2,568 (83·5%)	76 (48·8%)

The *Gram Kutchery* is an integral part of *Gram Panchayat* and it is a bold experiment and a complete break from the orthodox pattern of village administration under the bureaucracy which practically stopped at the S. D. O.'s level. It is quite futile to expect that the institution would meet immediate success. For

the first time substantial judicial powers were delegated to the village folks to be elected by adult suffrage. It is just expected that the experiment would release forces for a certain amount of social tension, pull of casteism or sectarianism. It is quite possible that the facilities afforded close at hand to bring a case might be an incentive to litigation. It is also not improbable that the disposal of justice may be somewhat limited because of feuds, casteism or sectarianism. But the institution has a certain amount of resilience and self-generating corrective principles. The institution may be weakened or tainted for sometime but the very source of corruption will generate corrective forces and the institution is bound to thrive. The statement of disposal of cases that has been quoted shows that quite a large percentage of criminal cases and civil suits have been compromised every year. The percentage calculation has been shown within brackets in the columns 8 and 9. The percentage of compromises in civil suits is however not as encouraging as in criminal cases. The highest level in civil suits was at 48.8 per cent in 1959-60 while the highest percentage was 85 8 per cent in 1951-52. The percentage of compromise of criminal and civil cases in 1959-60 was 83 5 per cent. This is a healthy sign.

The statistics suggest a higher incidence of litigation year to year. This however has to be taken with the back ground that every year more and more *Gram Kutcheries* are opened and function and the number in 1960 is 351.

Jail and Lock-up.

There is one District Jail of First class status at Purnea which is under the direct administrative control of the Inspector-General of Prisons, Bihar. The jail is under a wholetime Superintendent of Jail with a staff of one Jailor, two Assistant Jailors, one Clerk, five Head Warders and 47 Warders including two Female Warders. The registered accommodation in the District Jail is for 582 prisoners But there is congestion

The average jail population for the last 6 years has been as follows:—

		Male.	Female.
1954	.	617.09	7.04
1955	..	769.91	11.52
1956	..	595 65	8 35
1957	..	503.94	8 84
1958	..	739 11	7 02
1959	..	628.82	8.26

There are three subsidiary jails at the three subdivisional headquarters at Katihar, Araria and Kishanganj. They are also under the direct control of the Inspector-General of Prisons, Bihar and under the local administrative control of part-time Superintendents of Jail, who are the Civil Assistant Surgeons Incharge of the Subdivisional Hospital at the respective subdivisional headquarters. The establishment charge of the warder staff of Katihar Sub-Jail is affiliated to the Central Jail, Bhagalpur and the other two sub-jails at Kishanganj and Araria are affiliated to the Purnea District Jail.

Prison discipline and Welfare Measures.

Discipline of the standard required under the Jail Manual Rules is maintained. Under-trial prisoners are kept separately from the convicted prisoners.

The convicted prisoners are given proper training for some cottage industries, such as cloth weaving, *duree* weaving, cane work, bamboo work, jute-string making, etc.

They are also given elementary education inside the Purnea Jail up to the upper standard. The prisoners are allowed reasonable access to newspapers, books and musical instruments.

Facilities for musical recreation on Sundays, festival days and certain important holidays are given. The Welfare State wants to make the prisoners useful citizens. Some bold measures have been introduced. An experiment of release of prisoners on *parole* system is being done. There is one officer under the Education Department designated as After-care-Officer, who takes care of the released prisoners in matter of their after-care and rehabilitation in the society. The State Government has very recently introduced an Act, "The Bihar Probation of Offenders Act, 1959". According to this Act a separate office under the District-Probation Office, has been created for Purnea district. The head office has been located at Purnea. The head of the institution is designated as Principal Probation Officer who is also the Superintendent of District Jail, Purnea. The object of the scheme is to make a rational and human approach to the problem. The woodenness of the old system under which once a prisoner, he is always condemned in society has to go. To work out this scheme offenders are frequently released on probation of good conduct. By virtue of this Act, the offenders, instead of being sent to the jails to serve their imprisonment, are released by the trying courts and placed under the supervision of District Probation Officer for a certain period.

A "Remand Home" has been established at Katihar under a Lady Deputy Superintendent. The aim is to receive juvenile offenders up to the age of 14, and also those children, who need care and protection, and to train them up into various crafts at Government cost and to rehabilitate them at suitable places. There is now a Special Officer and Director of Probation Scheme with headquarters at Patna and attached to the Prison Department.

There is a Board of Visitors consisting of the District Magistrate, Purnea as its *ex-officio* Chairman, District Judge, Purnea (*ex-officio* member), Civil Surgeon, Purnea (*ex-officio* member), S. D. O., Sadar, Purnea (*ex-officio* member) and eight non-official members (mostly M. L. As. of the district). They visit the District Jail both individually and by monthly roster prepared by the District Magistrate, Purnea. They also attend the Board of Visitors' meeting held at the Purnea District Jail quarterly.

There is no accommodation either for special class of prisoners or political prisoners in the Purnea District Jail and if any such prisoner is received in this jail, he is immediately transferred to the Bhagalpur Central Jail, where suitable accommodation is provided for this class of prisoners.

All juvenile delinquents, with conviction for more than three months are transferred to the Borstal School at Daltonganj and those who are to remain confined in the Purnea District Jail, are given proper education and physical training suitable to their age.

Criminal Justice.

Previous to 1st July, 1957 criminal cases were tried at the first instance by the Deputy Magistrates and Sub Deputy Magistrates who were under the control of District Magistrate. These officers were empowered to hold preliminary enquiry in Sessions cases and commit them to the Court of Sessions. Appeals from the decisions of Second and Third Class Magistrates were heard by the District Magistrate or some other Magistrate specially empowered to hear appeals and appeals from the decisions of First Class Magistrates were heard by the District Judge or the Additional District Judge. The decisions of the District or Additional District Judges could be taken up in revision or review to the Hon'ble Patna High Court.

Under the above set-up the District Magistrates, Deputy Magistrates and Sub-Deputy Magistrates dealt with the administration of criminal justice besides their executive work. This

system of mixing up the executive and judicial functions in the one and the same person was a source of vehement criticism. This criticism was mainly based on the view that a person, who has to carry on executive functions, may not always be in a position to do full justice to his judicial work. He may have extra judicial information recording the case in his file. He may have had a hand in calling for a charge-sheet from the police for the case. It was felt that if fair and impartial justice is to be done there should be a separation of the two functions, and the same person should not be made both a judge and an executive magistrate.

It was on the 1st of July 1957, that this separation of the judicial and executive functions was carried out in Purnea district. Judicial Magistrates were put under the District, Judge while the Executive Magistrates were put under the District Magistrate.

Broadly there are two categories of criminal cases, one under the provisions of the Indian Penal Code and the other under different Acts other than the Indian Penal Code, such as, Bengal Irrigation Act, Bye-laws of District Boards and Municipalities, Bengal Vaccination Act, Indian Railway Act, Motor Vehicles Act, proceedings under Criminal Procedure Code, etc

Cases under the first category are of two kinds—cognizable and non-cognizable. Cognizable cases are those which are taken cognizance of by the police The police investigates and submit final reports or charge-sheets to the Subdivisional Magistrates concerned. Cases for which charge-sheets are submitted are ripe for hearing and the Subdivisional Magistrate transfers them to the Munsif-Magistrates or Judicial Magistrates for trial. In cases where Final Reports are submitted, the Magistrate has to apply his judicial mind; he may accept the police report which means according to him the case is not *prima facie* established and the accused persons should not be put to their trial. He has also the prerogative to order the police to submit charge-sheet, if he thinks the police report should not be accepted. After charge-sheet is submitted the case is sent to trial to the Munsif-Magistrate or to the Judicial Magistrate.

Complaints for non-cognizable offences are filed by the aggrieved party before the Subdivisional Magistrates. If from the statement on oath of the complainant, the Subdivisional Magistrate concludes that the case is *prima facie* not made out, he may dismiss the complaint outright. If he wants he may hold an enquiry himself or he may order any Magistrate or the police or any respectable person to hold an enquiry and to submit

report to him. On the enquiry report he may dismiss the complaint or he may summon the accused and transfer the case to the Munsif-Magistrate or Judicial Magistrate for trial. The Subdivisional Magistrate's orders could be taken to the District Judge in appeal.

Appeals from the decisions of the Munsif-Magistrates and Judicial Magistrates are heard by the Sessions Judge or Additional Judge to whom the cases are transferred by the District and Sessions Judge. Decisions of the District or Additional District Judge could be taken to the Patna High Court and finally to the Supreme Court.

The second category of cases, viz., those that do not come under the perview of the Indian Penal Code, but are offences against other Acts are filed by the departments concerned and are triable by Magistrates who are not Munsif-Magistrates or Judicial Magistrates. Such cases may be under section 93 of the Bengal Irrigation Act, cases under sections 3 and 6 of the Prevention of Enquiry Act, cases under bye-laws of District Boards and Municipalities, cases under sections 28, 29A, 29B and 30 of the Bengal Vaccination Act, under Police Act, under Motor Vehicles Act, cases under sections 108, 112, 113, 118, 121, 122 of the Indian Railway Act and proceedings relating to maintenance of law and order as regulated by Cr. P. C. (sections 107, 109, 110)

The District and Sessions Judge is the administrative head of the Judicial Department of the District. There are two Additional District and Sessions Judges in this judgeship of whom one has been vested with the powers of Special Judge to try cases under sections 161, 165, etc., of Indian Penal Code. There are at present two Judicial Magistrates at each of the Sadar and Katihar subdivisions, one Munsif-Magistrate at Kishanganj and one Judicial and one Munsif-Magistrate at Araria. Besides these Officers there is one Special Magistrate with second class powers at Kishanganj and two Special Magistrates at Sadar, one of whom is vested with second class powers and the other with third class powers.

Besides the Magistrates there are two courts under the Village Administration Act one in Sadar subdivision and the other is in Araria subdivision. There are 351 courts (*Panchayat Adalat*) under the Panchayat Raj Act. The administration of *Panchayat Adalats* has been separately dealt with.

Statistics of Sessions cases from 1949 to 1960 are given below—

Year.	Number of Sessions cases.		Number of persons.		Number of witnesses examined.	Remarks.
	Received.	Disposed of.	Acquitted or discharged.	Convicted.		
1	2(a)	3	4	5	6	7
1949	86+41=127	84	245	120	1,042	The later figures (a) indicate the number of cases pending from the previous year.
1950	77+43=120	76	197	116	1,088	
1951	112+44=156	99	245	120	1,107	
1952	104+57=161	104	313	127	1,142	
1953	83+57=140	128	477	176	1,531	
1954	103+12=115	67	317	87	889	
1955	92+48=140	87	326	152	1,161	
1956	133+53=186	145	473	226	1,681	
1957	92+41=133	93	236	105	1,019	
1958	151+40=191	111	388	115	1,461	
1959	111+80=191	158	360	187	2,083	
1960	83+33=116	85	213	102	1,163	

It is remarkable that since 1952 the high incidence of such cases in one year is followed by a drop in the rear. The percentage of persons convicted to the total number of accused varies from 22 per cent to 33 per cent.

The break-up figures of the important Sessions cases from 1951 to 1960 are given below:—

Year.	Section 302.	Section 304.	Sections 363, 364, 366 to 369.	Section 376.	Sections 395, 396.	Sections 399, 402.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1951 ..	16	7	1	3	52	8
1952 ..	17	6	7	1	40	9
1953 .	12	..	4	4	44	3
1954 ..	13	11	6	6	37	6
1955 ..	14	6	7	3	32	8
1956 ..	24	13	11	5	33	1
1957 ..	12	8	3	4	25	..
1958 ..	24	1	8	5	65	9
1959 ..	12	5	7	2	29	2
1960 ..	17	3	6	8	20	1

From the perusal of the table it appears that murders are quite large in this district. The lowest figures was in 1953, in 1957 and in 1959 when 12 murder cases were committed to Sessions. The highest figures were in 1956 and in 1958 when there were 24 murder cases.

In Sessions division the number of robberies and dacoities seems to be high. Regarding dacoities the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911) mentions; "Purnea continues to be the most troublesome district we have to deal with so far as dacoities are concerned. The convictions obtained during the year, especially the conviction of the famous dacoit Munshia, will, I hope, have a salutary effect; but in a district where every other man is a potential dacoit provided with a place of refuge across the border, it is too much to expect that we shall entirely stamp out dacoity for some time to come". Though the remarks of the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* on the basis of the above figures still hold good but it cannot be said that the incidence of dacoities in Purnea district is more than in other districts of North Bihar.

Legal Profession and Bar Association.

The legal profession consists of Barristers, Advocates, Pleaders, Mukhtears and their clerks.

At present there is no Barrister in this district. There are a number of Advocates in Purnea, Kishanganj and Araria. Advocates and other lawyers from Purnea frequently visit the Katihar courts. A few lawyers have shifted their practice entirely to Katihar courts and have started living there after Katihar was made a subdivisional headquarters.

There are one hundred and thirty-one members in Purnea Bar Library. Out of them twelve are Advocates. The Bar has got their own building and a small library. The members contribute a monthly fees for the maintenance of the Bar Library. The building is old and rather inadequate for the present needs. The number of lawyers in Araria is forty-one out of whom two are Advocates. The number of lawyers in Kishanganj is twenty-five out of whom one is Advocate. There are twenty-eight lawyers at Katihar.

The number of the Mukhtears in the district is on the decline as Mukhtearship examination has been abolished and no fresh Mukhtears are being recruited. The Mukhtears had to pass a very stiff examination which practically comprised all the branches of law. They could practise in the Magistrates' courts and some of the Mukhtears particularly in Purnea and Kishanganj have been known for their ability for cross-examination and presentation of facts. Their fees being lower they form a very useful link between the litigants and the lawyers with higher rate of fees and the courts.

At present there are fifty-seven Mukhtears in Purnea, twelve at Katihar, thirteen at Kishanganj and ten at Araria. There is

a separate Mukhtears' Library at the district headquarters and at Kishanganj.

Purnea Bar has produced quite a number of brilliant members of the legal profession on both the criminal and civil sides. The number of *zamindars* and very large cultivators being quite considerable in this district, Purnea Bar was quite attractive before. Advocates and Barristers from Patna and other places in Bihar used to frequently appear in Purnea Courts. Purnea Bar has been known for independence, integrity and scholarship. The Bar has supplied the leadership in society and politics. The middle class community in Purnea district is very largely associated with the Bar. It is unfortunate that with the abolition of *zamindari*, merging of a certain part of Kishanganj to West Bengal and the economic upset of the district, the Bar is undergoing a certain incidence of lassitude and frustration. The Bar has always kept up a dignified and a good relationship with the Bench.

Administration of Civil Justice.

Civil justice is administered by the District Judge and six permanent subordinate Civil Courts. The Hon'ble High Court deputes additional courts whenever there is congestion in the files at any station. The number of the courts is not fixed and may vary.

Courts and their Powers.

The subordinate Civil Courts in the district comprise of the Court of a Sub-Judge and a Munsif at the headquarters, two Munsifs in the Kishanganj subdivision and one each at Araria and Katihar where subdivisional headquarters have been established recently.

The District Judge has powers to try suits and hear appeals but generally suits, except of special nature, are not tried by him. Recently his appellate powers in the civil side has been raised up to Rs. 10,000 by an amendment of the Civil Procedure Code. He is also vested with some special powers, viz., (1) Special Judge to hear appeals in Survey Cases, under section 109, B. T. Act, (2) Special Judge to try cases under Employees State Insurance Act as the operation of the said Act has been extended to Katihar town, and (3) Claims Officer in respect of cases of minor Railway accidents. Besides civil powers, the District

Judge has the powers of a Sessions Judge also. Since the introduction of the scheme of separation in this district from 1st July 1957, he is also vested with the powers of a Magistrate, 1st Class as also of an Additional District Magistrate. He is empowered to inspect all the Criminal Courts and offices in the district except that of the District Magistrate.

The Sub-Judge has unlimited pecuniary jurisdiction in the original civil side and is vested with the powers of a S. C. S. Judge to try suits up to the value of Rs. 500 within the jurisdiction of Sadar subdivision. He is also vested with powers to hear civil appeals decided by Munsifs and of a part-time Claims Officer under the Land Reforms Act. He is also vested with the powers of a revising authority of voters' lists under the Peoples Representation Act, 1951. The Sub-Judge who is posted permanently, is invariably vested with the powers of an Assistant Sessions Judge. According to the latest amendment of the Criminal Procedure Code, the Assistant Sessions Judge has been empowered to hear criminal appeals against decisions of Second and Third Class Magistrates. The Assistant Sessions Judge is also sometimes vested with powers of a Special Judge to try cases under sections 161, 165, etc., of I. P. C.

The Munsifs are vested with powers to try suits in the original side as well as that of a S. C. C. Judge within their respective jurisdictions, the pecuniary limit of which varies with the seniority of an officer. The powers on the original side do not exceed Rs. 4,000 in any case and that of a S. C. C. Judge is limited to Rs. 250.

Court Buildings.

The present Civil Court buildings at the district headquarters were inaugurated in the year 1937 by the Hon'ble Sir Courtney Terrell, the then Chief Justice of the Patna High Court. The previous court building, which was a magnificent double storied masonry work situated at a distance of about a furlong to the north of the present building was also inaugurated by him in December, 1928. Unfortunately a few years after the building was severely damaged by the earthquake in January, 1934 and was condemned. The courts have been rebuilt.

Among the court buildings at the outlying subdivisions, the recent one is the Civil Court at Katihar. It was inaugurated by the District Judge in 1957. With the establishment of the

subdivisional headquarters at Katihar, the criminal court buildings, etc., were constructed as also new Civil Court buildings near about the same time. The oldest Civil Court buildings are at Araria and have been found to be inadequate for the present needs. The Civil Court buildings at Kishanganj, though old, are in a better condition and require additions to accommodate the Circuit Sessions Court, office, etc., Kishanganj has also been notified to be the seat of a Circuit Sessions Court in 1958.

Registrar System.

In order to effect improvement in the office administration of the Civil Courts, the Registrar system has been introduced in this district since November, 1956. Senior Munsifs are appointed as Registrar to whom powers of Judge-in-charge of Nazarat, Record Room, Accounts Department, Forms and Stationery and Copying Department are delegated. According to recent orders of the High Court, a Civil Court Registrar also performs the functions of a Magistrate in respect of criminal fines imposed by the court of judicial (Stipendiary and Honorary) and Munsif-Magistrates.

Transfer of Territories.

According to the transfer of Territories Act (Control Act 10 of 1956) considerable portions of Kishanganj Munsifi and some portions of Katihar Munsifi have been transferred to West Bengal. Under orders of the High Court old records relating to the transferred areas have to be made over. They are being sorted out for this purpose. The current records were made over to the West Bengal authorities shortly after the transfer was given effect to.

Land Reforms Act and Survey Operations.

The abolition of *zamindari* system as a result of the operations of the Land Reforms Act and other changes in the tenancy laws have brought about revolutionary changes in the working of the Civil Courts. The latest amendment of certain sections of the Criminal Procedure Code relating to land disputes have also added to the same. The survey operations in this district which have been concluded in 1960 will also have far-reaching consequences in relation to civil litigation.

The chart that follows will show the condition of civil suits and cases, its rise or fall and other variations during the last twelve years in this judgeship.

CIVIL SUITS AND CASES.

Year.	Civil Suits.			Civil Appeals.			[…]isc. Appeals			Misc. Cases.			Execution Cases.		
	(a)	Instituted	Disposed of	(a)	Instituted.	Disposed of	(a)	Instituted	Disposed of	(a)	Instituted	Disposed of	(a)	Instituted.	Disposed of.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1949 ..	2,468	9,277	[illegible]	292	321	[illegible]	70	112	130	610	1,490	1,479	2,966	5,162	5,530
1950 ..	2,533	7,866	7,906	361	240	398	55	99	111	644	1,335	1,491	2,637	4,399	4,471
1951	2,683	8,623	8,366	209	158	209	17	92	96	514	1,282	[illegible]	2,608	4,420	4,573
1952 ..	3,030	8,593	[illegible]	167	[illegible]	169	41	76	76	566	1,245	1,236	2,500	3,150	3,474
1953	3,376	10,348	[illegible]	182	272	[illegible]	41	84	74	591	[illegible]	1,084	2,211	3,534	3,466
1954 ..	3,293	14,345	[illegible]	234	291	246	53	83	78	563	1,337	1,376	2,287	3,664	3,789
1955 ..	3,676	12,111	12,212	281	313	323	59	[illegible]	161	551	[illegible]	[illegible]	2,207	3,686	3,772
1956 ..	3,985	11,141	10,443	[illegible]	[illegible]	279	35	98	82	805	1,899	1,772	2,165	5,323	5,010
1957	4,906	8,273	8,276	303	219	256	48	75	90	721	1,901	1,738	2,533	5,162	3,672
1958	5,342	8,280	7,399	248	308	261	18	89	74	927	1,928	1,813	4,092	4,298	4,748
1959 ..	6,596	8,360	7,631	312	728	414	33	151	93	1,077	2,161	2,035	3,669	3,806	4,349
1960	7,728	8,001	8,191	645	642	292	84	224	68	1,230	2,258	2,075	3,148	3,417	3,758

NOTE—The figures shown in (a) indicate the number of cases pending from previous year.

Tamadi.

A peculiar feature of the judgeship is that the *Mulki tamadi* falling on the 1st Baisak (Bengali year) is also observed here along with Fasli *tamadi* unlike other judgeships in Bihar. In the Kishanganj Munsifi the *mulki tamadi* is only observed and not the Fasli *tamadi*.

Sessions Division.

It has already been stated that Kishanganj has been notified to be the seat of a Sessions division in this district since 1958. The Bar Association of Kishanganj moved in the matter as parties and their witnesses coming from the interior of the subdivision felt much difficulty in coming to Purnea in connection with Sessions trials, especially in the rainy season, due to bad roads and turbulent rivers.

Residential Quarters

There is a considerable dearth of residential quarters for the gazetted and non-gazetted Government servants of the Civil Courts. Difficulty is experienced especially when any additional court functions at any station or ministerial officers are transferred from one station to another. The number of staff quarters at Katihar, which have recently been built, is, for the present sufficient. The number of quarters allotted to the ministerial officers and peons at the headquarters is very inadequate and covers not more than 15 per cent of the total strength of Government servants of these categories. There are no residential quarters for ministerial officers or peons at Araria and Kishanganj Some quarters for the gazetted officers at the headquarters, viz. Munsif, Additional District Judge, Additional Sub-Judge, Additional Munsif and Munsif-Magistrate are necessary Quarters for Additional Munsifs and Munsif-Magistrates are also necessary at the outlying subdivisions.

Separation Scheme.

The scheme of separation of executive and judicial functions is in operation in this district since 1st July 1957, as mentioned before. There are at present two judicial Magistrates each at the Sadar and Katihar subdivisions, one Munsif-Magistrate at Kishanganj and one Judicial and one Munsif-Magistrate at Araria. Besides these courts there is one court of Special Magistrate with second class powers at Kishanganj and two at Sadar, one of whom is vested with second class and the other third class powers. As a result of constant supervision, the system of working of these courts has improved much and further improvement

is expected with changes in the existing rules regarding post-conviction measures, service of processess, preparation and issue of copies, payment of diet and T. A. to witnesses, deposit of records, etc., as they have been gradually coming under direct control of the Sessions Judge. Some difficulty is experienced in the matter of supply of forms, stationery articles, furniture, law books, etc., for which the Judicial Magistrates are still dependant on the District Magistrate. It is, however, hoped that in these matters also the controlling power of the Sessions Judge will be extended to cover the Judicial Magistrates as well.

VIGILANCE COMMITTEE.

According to directions of the High Court a Vigilance Committee was formed at the headquarters with the object of checking corruption in courts and offices. It consists of the District Judge as its Chairman and seven members two of whom are members from the Bar Association, two are from the public, one is the Registrar, Civil Courts, and two are senior ministerial officers. Complaint boxes have been kept at prominent places in the court buildings at Sadar and outlying courts and these are opened regularly and applications looked into. The members of the Vigilance Committee are selected every year by the District Judge and the Committee sits once a month in the office chamber of the District Judge to hold deliberations on the connected matters.

ADDITIONAL COURTS.

Due to increase in institution of suits and cases, civil or criminal, whenever there is congestion in files of the Permanent Courts, Additional Courts are deputed to remove the congestion. Thus sometimes one and sometimes two Additional District and Sessions Judges were deputed to remove congestion in Sessions files. At present there are two Additional District and Sessions Judges deputed in this judgeship. The first Additional Sessions Judge has been vested with the powers of a Special Judge to try cases under sections 161, 165, etc., of I. P. C. Both the Additional District Judges are also empowered specially to hear Survey appeals filed under section 109, B. T. Act, and are Claims Officer to hear cases of minor Railway accidents.

There is at present one Additional Subordinate Judge and one Additional Munsif at Purnea. Some Additional Munsifs are expected to be deputed to this judgeship to dispose of Survey suits.

CHAPTER XIII.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

HISTORY.

Local Self-Government has been loosely described as government by elected local bodies charged with administrative and executive duties in several matters concerning the inhabitants of a particular district. The local bodies are vested with powers to make bye-laws for their guidance.

Local administration of this type to decide local matters has been a part of the administrative system of India for many centuries. The indigenous *Gram Panchayat* is an instance. But the institution of Local Self-Government as we understand now, is of recent origin, an innovation of the British Government particularly with the idea of decentralising the administrative functions.

The earlier history of the district from the beginning of the 19th century does not show that there were self governing institutions for the present district of Purnea or any part of it. Apparently in the aftermath of the Muslim rule and before the British administration was firmly established, there do not appear to have been superior bodies controlling the affairs of roads, ferries, public health, etc., which were of common interest to all the inhabitants of the district.

Dr. Francis Buchanan, has left an excellent account of his travels of the Purnea district (1809-10). He has left a description of the public works, roads, tanks, ferries, etc., but underlined the want of any central agency or statutory bodies controlling these affairs. Sometimes he mentions that the *zamindars* were responsible for the roads and ferries and elsewhere he mentions that the Magistrates were not coping with these responsibilities.

From Buchanan's account it is gathered that not much of official attention had been paid to the management of local affairs. Public works were carried on by the religious sentiments of the private persons: instead of the motive of public utility, Buchanan mentions—

"Making roads, digging tanks, and planting trees, among the Hindus are religious duties, and almost every

rich man performs one or other, and often the whole; but as the inducement is to obtain the favour of God, public utility on these occasions is not at all consulted, nay, the works often turn out nuisances. The plantation consists of trees totally useless, or of sour resinous mangoes, the worst of all fruit, and soon runs into a forest harbouring wild beasts; the tank is a dirty puddle, which is soon choked with weeds and becomes a source of disease; the road is never intended for the traveller; it does not lead from one market-place to another, but usually from the house of the founder to some temple that he chooses to frequent, or to some tank or river where he bathes; and as it usually intersects some public routes, a breach must be formed to allow travellers to proceed, and this renders the road itself impracticable, even when it might happen to be in a line that was useful."*

Buchanan has also mentioned that there were a few roads near the capital and that some of the indigo works were connected by roadways. He, however, mentioned that the bullock-carts were, in a way, left to find a road in the best manner that they could. He commented on the carelessness of the officials regarding the maintenance of the roads and had observed that the district was not well connected with roads with the cantonments or with the capitals of the adjacent districts. From Buchanan's report, it appears that the convicts were occasionally employed to work on the roads. Regarding ferries, Buchanan has mentioned that the owners of land or other rich men appointed *ghatwals* or ferrymen who furnished the boat and paid the share of profit to the person who gave him the licence. Since there is no specific mention in Buchanan's report as to any particular central agency for constructing and maintaining the roads, it may be presumed that the roads were looked after by the *zamindars*, ferry owners and also by the Magistrates. This divided responsibility did not contribute to good roads.

As regards ferries also, no statutory regulations were observed during Buchanan's time. This has already been mentioned in the Chapter on Communications.

An Account of the District of Purnea in 1809-10 by F. Buchanan at page 593 (Bihar and Orissa Research Society)

From this we get the impression, in general, that by Buchanan's time, the local self-governing bodies as they are now, were not existing. Regulations were passed in 1816 and 1819 authorising the Government to levy money for the maintenance of ferries and the repair and construction of roads, bridges and drains. In administering the fund so raised the Government were advised by the local committees with the Magistrate as Secretary.* This was in a way the nucleus of the formation of the District Board. The *zamindars* were still associated with the maintenance of some roads and the Military Department also looked after some roads in their use. The European planters were closely associated with roads useful to them.

After the Movement of 1857, a new turn was made in the administrative set-up of the country. Roads were found very necessary for quick military and police movements. Municipalities were brought into existence at many places. A Municipality was established in 1864 in Purnea town, the headquarters of the district. In 1887, another municipality was founded in Kishanganj, which was called by the name of Krishanganj, as W. W. Hunter has mentioned in his book.

Hunter has also mentioned the name of Raniganj Municipality, which had long ceased to exist before 1911 when the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* was published. In his account Hunter mentions about Raniganj Municipality: "The population of the hamlets contained within municipal limits is 3,024 females; but the total inhabitants of Raniganj itself number only 1,498 souls. The municipality is a *chaukidari* union established under Act XX of 1856. In 1874-75 its affairs were managed by a committee of three non-official native members. During that year the house-tax, at the rate of 4d. per head of the municipal population, realized [£ 105.2s. 0d; and there was at the beginning of that period a balance in hand from previous years of] £ 16.10s. 0d. The average income of the three preceding years had been £ 88. 16s. 0d. The total expenditure in 1874-75 was £ 89, of which £ 75.8s. 0d. was devoted to the maintenance of police, and £ 13. 12s. 0d., to the office establishments of the union. The balance in hand on the 1st April 1875 was £ 32. 12s. 0d. The municipal police force consists of twelve men; and in addition to these, there are stationed in the

*A reference to the old volumes of *Calcutta Gazette* of the third quarter of the nineteenth century will give the names of the members of such local committees (P. C. R. C.).

town for the protection of the surrounding subdivision, 1 sub-inspector, 1 head-constable, and 11 constables. Raniganj contains a primary school, attended by 50 boys, whose teacher receives a stipend of Rs 5 (10s.) a month from Government, besides local fees".* The other two municipalities of the district, namely Katihar and Forbesganj were created in 1905 and 1912 respectively.

W. W. Hunter mentions in his book that there were only three towns in the district, and three of them (Raniganj, Kishanganj and Purnea) had municipalities

By 1871 it had been decided that cess calculated on a certain percentage of the rent was to be imposed and would be utilised for the construction and maintenance of roads, ferries, etc. The committee that was formed to look after the affairs was controlled by the officials This District Road Cess Committee may be described to be the precursor of the District Board

In 1882, Lord Ripon, the Viceroy and Governor-General, made an earnest endeavour to introduce a real element of Local Self Government After a good deal of consideration, the Bengal Local Self-Government Act was passed in 1885 In the same year the Purnea District Board was established, and Local Boards were constituted for each of the subdivisions of Purnea, Kishanganj and Araria. Thus the administration of local affairs was given a formal and statutory recognition.

There are now four municipalities in Purnea district, viz., Purnea, Katihar, Forbesganj and Kishanganj The total area in the district under municipal administration is 19 23 square miles only with a population of 94 879 persons according to 1951 census.

PURNEA MUNICIPALITY

Although, the status of a municipality was conferred on Purnea under Act III (B C.) of 1864, the urban importance of Purnea had begun at least from the end of the 18th century when it became the seat of the *Nawabs* It is true that not much details are available as to the civic life of Purnea prior to the British rule It may, however, be said that as usual under the Muslim rule custom duty and other polls were levied on the

*An attempt to find out when Raniganj Municipality was abolished has been unsuccessful (P C. R. C.).

population for the maintenance of roads, bridges and ferries. Purnea being the capital of a frontier district has had a considerable importance in pre-British days. Purnea town was also important for trade in jute export both by road and by river.

Francis Buchanan's memoirs on Purnea give us some glimpses of the town. He mentions that "the town of Puraniya, ...is very much scattered, and consists of various detached parts on both sides of the Saongra river, altogether occupying a space of about three miles square; but much is occupied by plantations, gardens, and open spaces, for the soil is so poor that it admits of little cultivation. On the east side of the river is the most compact and considerable portion of the town, called by various names, about which no two persons agree This compact part, which may be called the town, consists of one wide and tolerably straight street, decently built and tiled and extending about half a mile from east to west. Many lanes pass from each side to two streets which run parallel to the principal one, but which are very irregular and ill-built, although some of the best houses are situated behind them, and have no entrance except through these miserable lanes"

Francis Buchanan mentioned that the *Daroga* or the head constable of the town had calculated that there were 8,231 houses and 32,100 souls in Purnea According to the *Daroga*, out of the 2,698 houses and 9,951 people belonged to the villages situated entirely in the country leaving 5,536 houses and 22,149 people Buchanan had found the town to have an area of about 9 square miles and he seriously doubted the estimate of the *Daroga* regarding the population as underrated. Buchanan mentioned that "this town, which occupies a space equal to more than a half of London, most assuredly does not contain 50,000 people, although it is one of the best country towns in Bengal. It is supposed to contain about 100 dwelling houses and 70 shops built entirely or in part of brick, and 200 that are roofed with tiles."

Buchanan had particularly observed the wooden bridge built across the capital Saongra, connected Rambagh and eastern part of the town. In Buchanan's time the town had "good many tolerable roads made by the convicts".*

*Use of convicts for the making of roads, bridges, etc., was common in the 19th century. *See Muzaffarpur Old Records and Sarkar Saran* published by Gazetteer Revision Branch, Revenue Department (P. C. R. C.).

A later record of Purnea town is found in W. W. Hunter's *Statistical Account of Bengal,* Vol. XV (Monghyr and Purniah), published in 1877. It seems that the earlier records of the district had been lost, so that the exact date on which the town was formally declared the headquarters station could not be determined, but it was somewhere about 1771. Regarding the population, Hunter has mentioned that since Buchanan's time "there seems to have been a very great decline in population. The area for which at the present day we have accurate census information is that contained within the municipality, whose limits, however, differ very much from those of Purniah town in Dr. Buchanan Hamilton's time. Still a fair comparison may be made. The old town area remains intact, measuring three miles and half long by one wide...... .The area is now not less than 15 square miles." In 1869 the experimental census disclosed a total population of 11,108 as against 16,057 in the first regular census of 1872. It is quite possible that the population recorded in the census of 1869 and 1872 were both inaccurate as the techniques of conducting census were very imperfect and there were strong oppositions.

Purnea Municipality had been established in 1864. A study of the *Supplementaries of the Old Calcutta Gazette* of 1871 luckily revealed some account of Purnea Municipality in 1871.

In his letter no. 5, dated Purnea, the 9th May, 1871, J. B. Worgon, Esq., Chairman of the Municipal Commissioners of Purnea had reported to the Commissioner of Bhagalpur Division on the activities of the Purnea Municipality. He had mentioned: "I have the honor to submit the usual annual statement of the actual income and expenditure of the Purneah Municipal Improvement Fund for the year 1870-71, with the addition of a column showing the budgeted figures under each head, which may be found useful for ready reference.

2. * * * * *

They are not very great in any item except wheel tax, and this certainly does not show that the budget has been properly worked up to. I am disposed to think that some amendment of the law is desirable, especially as regards the non-notification of demand. The issue of notice of demand would, I think, obviate much hardship and save much trouble. Much default now happens because men think they are not known and may escape,

which the issue of a notice would prevent. As it is, 75 per cent of the cart owners have to be prosecuted in order to get the tax in at all.

3 The income of the year is less by Rs 1,490 than the budget and estimates, whilst the expenditure is some Rs 4,400 less Budgets are, however, made so early under existing arrangements, that this is not unintelligible

4. The Sowrian bridge is still in fair trafficable condition

5 Thirteen meetings of the full committee were called, and the finance and road sub committee held seventeen meetings during the year

6 The accounts were regularly overhauled by me every month, and the progress of collection, current and outstanding, watched by means of tables specially devised and appended to the monthly accounts Beyond this I was not able to afford much personal attention to municipal matters during the year, owing to the number of other calls upon my time, and I found the assistance of the sub committee, whose proceedings I regularly revised, very valuable

7 No new works of importance were undertaken during the year, but the metalling of the road through the city was completed, and the thorough fares generally kept in good order *

In another document, letter no 1180, dated Bhagalpur, the 5th July, 1871 the Officiating Commissioner of Bhagalpur has referred to the Purnea Municipality in the following words —

"According to the trial census, the population of Purneah, with 7,572 homesteads, was set down at 11,108 people, but this must be erroneous Assuming five persons per house, the population may be roughly estimated at 40,000 souls

The total sum budgeted for the year amounted to Rs. 17,750, of which Rs. 16,?88 were realised, leaving a balance of Rs. 2,422

The incidence of taxation, exclusive of ferries, fines, tolls, pounds, and miscellaneous receipts, is five annas nine pies per head

*Supplement to the *Calcutta Gazette*, August 2, 1871.

Chief improvements during the year.—No new works of any importance were undertaken during the year.

New taxes.—None.

Roads.—The metalling of the main road through the city was completed, and the roads generally are kept in good repair. Rs. 2,173-12-0 only were expended for metalling roads, and Rs. 1,007 in repairs of unmetalled roads There appears to be only seven miles of metalled road in Purneah.

Committee.—The committee consists of five European members, four Mahomedans, and one Hindoo who held eighteen meetings. A finance committee sat besides, holding seventeen meetings during the year. Aga Sayfoola Khan, Syud Reza Alli, and Hameem Zynooddeen, rarely, if ever, attended the meetings; while Mirza Mahomed Hossein was a regular attendant, and takes considerable interest in municipal matters

The members of the committee levied fines to the amount of only Rs. 181, which, when compared with Bhaugulpore, Rs. 824, and Monghyr, Rs. 877, exhibits either much greater respect on the part of the inhabitants for the bye-laws, or else a considerable diminution of supervision as to their breach.

Registration of births and deaths.—No arrangement in force

Conservancy.—The chairman does not refer to this subject; but there has been no outbreak of sickness during the year. The chairman reports he was unable to afford much personal attention to municipal matters owing to the number of other calls upon his time.

The police costs as follows:—

	Population.	Rs.
Purnea	40,000	6,252

*Supplement to the *Calcutta Gazette*, August 2, 1871.

Hunter in his account of Purnea Municipality observes—

"Purniah is a municipality, constituted under Act III (B. C.) of 1864. The municipal concerns are managed by a committee of sixteen members, of whom thirteen are non-officials, ten being natives. During the year 1874-75, eight meetings were held. The total municipal income for that year was £ 3,989 2s. 0d; of which £ 815 8s. 0d. was derived from a tax on houses, lands and buildings; £ 234 16s. 0d. from a tax on horses, carriages, and carts, including fees for their registration; £ 125 8s. 0d. from cattle pounds; £ 8.2s. 0d. from tolls and ferries; £ 3 from fines levied under the municipal, bye-laws; and £ 2,802 8s. 0d. from other sources. Of this latter amount, £ 2,700 formed the result of a public subscription for the rebuilding of the bridge over the Saura river. The incidence of municipal taxation was 1s. 3¾d. per head . The income of 1873-74 had amounted only to £ 1,374 8s 0d., and the average income of the three preceding years was £ 1,627 16s. 0d. The total expenditure for 1874-75 was £ 1,387 4s. 0d.; of which £ 621 12s 0d was for the maintenance of police; £ 53. 6s. 0d for conservancy; £ 299 8s. 0d. for office establishment; £ 289 10s. 0d. for the repair of roads, £ 66 4s. 0d. for lighting charges; and £ 57 4s. 0d. for miscellaneous expenses. On the 1st April 1875, the large balance of £ 3,135 18s 0d. remained in hand, of which £ 534 represents accumulations from previous years."*

Mr. L. S. S. O'Malley, in *Purnea Gazetteer* (1911) has mentioned the names of three municipalities in the district, viz., Purnea, Kishanganj and Katihar. He gives a brief account of Purnea Municipality as follows:—

'The Purnea Municipality, which was established in 1864, is administered by a Municipal Board consisting of 19 Commissioners, of whom twelve are elected, five are nominated and two are *ex-officio* members. The area within municipal limits is 12.5 square

*W. W. Hunter's *Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol. XV, pp. 258-259

miles, and the number of rate-payers is 2,851. representing 20.3 per cent of the population residing in the municipal area. The average annual income of the Municipality during the 10 years 1891-92 to 1901-02 was Rs. 22,000 and the expenditure Rs. 19,000. In 1908-09 the income aggregated Rs. 30,000, besides an opening balance of Rs. 6,000 The chief source of income is a rate on houses and arable lands assessed at 7½ per cent on their annual value, which in that year brought in Rs. 14,000. A conservancy rate, levied at 3¼ per cent on the annual value of holdings, brought in Rs 5,000 a tax on animals and vehicles realised Rs. 3,000, and market fees Rs. 600. The total incidence of taxation was Re. 1-9-11 per head of the population. The expenditure in the same year was Rs. 34,000, excluding Rs. 6,000 expended in advances and deposits. The principal items of expenditure were medical relief, conservancy and public works, which accounted for 30.8, 26 5 and 19 1 per cent respectively of the disbursements."

About a century after the municipality was established in Purnea, in 1960, the Municipal Board now consists of 35 Commissioners of which 28 are elected on the basis of adult franchise and seven nominated by the State Government. This Municipality has a population of 25,060 in 1951 census, extending over 12½ square miles. The incidence of population has slightly increased than 19,036, the population in 1941 census due to natural accretion and the influx of refugees of both East and West Pakistan who have settled here. Gulabbagh and Nageswerbagh contiguous to the Purnea Junction station have been recently included within the municipal area.

The duties and powers of the Municipality are prescribed in the Bihar and Orissa Municipal Act, 1922 The number of rate-payers is 4,674. The percentage of rate-payers to the population is 18.3. The main sources of income are holding-tax, latrine-tax, cart registration fee, public vehicle registration fee, market and slaughter house, Government grants, tax on animals and rent on land. The principal items of expenditure are conservancy, lighting, public works, medical and education. The

figures of income and expenditure in the last five years were as follows:—

Years.		Income.	Expenditure.
		Rs.	Rs.
1954-55	..	3,96,350	1,91,295
1955-56	..	5,72,507	6,73,613
1956-57	..	5,16,270	5,68,664
1957-58	..	3,29,673	4,14,625
1958-59	..	6,62,309	6,14,698

It will be seen that the expenditure usually exceeds the income and the deficit is met by grants from Government Free and compulsory primary education is in force. There are fourteen primary schools under the direct management of the Municipality. The condition of the roads under the Municipality is not satisfactory. The Municipality with its limited resources is not in a position to keep all the roads in good repairs. It maintains 16.15 miles metalled and 34 miles unmetalled roads.

Kishanganj Municipality.

Earlier, this municipal town was known as Krishnaganj Buchanan has made certain references of this town in his account during 1809-10. A few lines may be quoted—

> "Krishnaganj, where the native officers reside, is a poor place; but it is situated between two market places, The one to the west is by the natives called Line-bazar, as containing the military cantonment. The officers' houses are all thatched, but are neat and comfortable, and the parade is very fine, being at all seasons dry and firm. The hospital is exceedingly comfortable. Besides the military, there may be 500 houses. The market east from Krishnaganj is called Kotubganj, is situated on the opposite side of the river, and contains about 600 houses."

During W. W. Hunter's time Kishanganj was not a full-fledged municipality, but formed a *chaukidari* union under Act XX of 1856 and was managed by a Municipal Committee of

seventeen non-official members. Regarding receipts and expenditure of the union he mentions as follows:—

"During the year 1874-75, £ 403 8s. 0d. was realised as a house tax, at the rate of 8 annas (1s) per head of the municipal population; of which £ 278 18s 0d was spent on police, £ 29 14s. 0d. on office establishment, £ 67 10s. 0d. on roads, and £ 1 10s 0d. on buildings. At the close of the year there was a balance in hand of £ 188 14s. 0d, of which £ 142 18s. represented accumulation from previous years." (Pp. 265).

Regarding Kishanganj Municipality the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911) mentions as follows:—

"Kishanganj was constituted a municipality in 1887, and has a Municipal Board consisting of 13 Commissioners, of whom seven are elected, five are nominated and one is an *ex-officio* member. The area within municipal limits is 5 square miles, and the number of rate-payers is 1,082, or 14 per cent of the population living within the municipal limits. The average annual income during the 10 years ending in 1901-02 was Rs. 8,000, and the expenditure was Rs. 7,000. In 1908-09 the income of the municipality was Rs. 20,000 (besides an opening balance of Rs. 12,000), of which Rs. 6,000 were derived from a tax on animals and vehicles, Rs. 3,000 from a tax on persons levied on the annual income of the assessees at the rate of 9 annas per Rs. 100, and Rs. 1,500 from a conservancy rate. The incidence of taxation was Re 1-11-0 per head of the population. The expenditure in the same year was Rs. 17,000, the principal items being public works, conservancy and medical relief, which accounted for 27.7, 25.0 and 24.5 per cent respectively."

The present area of the Kishanganj Municipality is 11.6 square miles whereas the previous area was 3.5 square miles The reason of the considerable increase in the area is that nine villages were added after State Reorganization of West Bengal and Bihar during 1956.

The following schools are managed by the Municipality:—

(1) One boys' middle school.

(2) One girls' proposed middle school.

(3) Three boys' U. P. schools.

(4) Four boys' L. P. schools.

(5) One girls' L. P. school.

Under the sanitary measures the Municipality has one qualified Sanitary Inspector, two Conservancy Inspectors, two Jamadars and one wholetime Vaccinator.

Water-supply Scheme has almost been completed on getting the loan of Rs. 4,25,500 from State Government. There are also tube-wells and *pucca* wells for water-supply.

Fifty per cent drains are *pucca* and cleaned daily. The main roads are in a bad condition and some of the lanes and bye-lanes have been brick-pitched.

There is one park for the children well equipped with sport equipments and electric lights.

All the streets are lighted with electric lights and lanes and bye-lanes are lighted with kerosene oil lamps.

The total population within the Municipality is 15,903 as per last census (1951) and the number of rent-payers is 2,204. This Municipality is managed by a Board having 25 members out of which 21 are duly elected and four are nominated by the State Government out of which one represents the Scheduled Castes, one is a woman and two are Government officials. At present, this Municipality maintains 101 number of roads including lanes and bye-lanes. The figures of income and expenditure in the last five years were as follows:—

Years.	Income.			Expenditure.		
	Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.
1954-55	2,54,667	7	9	2,76,909	0	0
1955-56	9,09,005	2	6	8,82,294	5	9
1956-57	1,62,984	8	3	1,27,520	11	3
1957-58	1,80,474.76 nP.			1,84,403.76 nP.		
1958-59	2,05,824.11 nP.			2,24,571 67 nP.		

KATIHAR MUNICIPALITY.

Katihar was constituted a municipality in 1905. Regarding the Katihar Municipality the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911) mentions as follows:—

> "Katihar..........has a Municipal Board consisting of 12 members, of whom eleven are nominated and one is an *ex-officio* member. The area within municipal limits is $1\frac{3}{4}$ square miles, and the number of rate-payers is 1,555, or 17.1 per cent of the population living within municipal limits. In 1908-09 the income of the municipality was Rs. 9,000 (excluding an opening balance of Rs. 13,000), of which Rs. 4,000 were derived from a tax on houses and lands assessed at $6\frac{1}{4}$ per cent per annum on the annual value of the holdings, Rs. 1,500 from a tax on animals and vehicles, and Rs. 1,000 from pounds. The expenditure in the same year was Rs. 18,000, the principal items being public works, conservancy and medical relief, which accounted for 64.4, 10.3 and 9.4 per cent, respectively."

The area of Katihar Municipality from 1905 to 1954 was $1\frac{3}{4}$ square miles. The population within the Municipality was 10,219 in 1911, 14,533 in 1921, 15,864 in 1931, and 26,320 in 1941. The steady growth of the population is an index to the rapid urbanisation of the area. Industrialisation has also helped in the growth of the population. Katihar is fast becoming an important industrial town in addition to being an important Railway Junction with a big railway population.

In 1959-60, it extends over an area of 4.2 square miles with a population of 42,365 according to 1951 census. The municipal town is divided into four wards. The Municipal Board consists of 20 members out of which sixteen are elected members (four representing each ward) and four are nominated by Government, each one representing railways, ladies, the depressed classes and local interests. The main sources of revenue of this Municipality are holding and latrine taxes which are assessed on annual value of holdings at the rate of 10 per cent and seven and half per cent respectively. It also derives revenue from cart-registration fees, licenses of vehicles, offensive and dangerous trade, rent of lands and stalls, fees and revenue from markets and slaughter-houses, cycles and cycle-rickshaws, fines under the Municipal Act, Food Adulteration Act, Cattle Trespass Act and various grants

from the Government. The income and expenditure of the Municipality of the last five years are given below:—

Years.		Income.	Expenditure.
		Rs.	Rs.
1954-55	..	2,34,039	2,56,440
1955-56	..	5,55,623	5,69,076
1956-57	..	6,50,756	5,54,759
1957-58	..	2,92,866	4,25,150
1958-59	..	5,89,241	5,40,208

This Municipality employs 200 scavengers and sweepers for rendering direct services to the rate-payers. Most of the important roads and lanes have been electrified and kerosene oil lamps are also being provided by the Municipality in non-electrified areas. The condition of roads within the municipal limits is not satisfactory due to the shortage of finance. It manages two middle schools for boys and 15 primary schools for boys and girls including one Sanskrit *tol* and one primary school for depressed classes. The Katihar Hospital, previously managed by a committee, has been provincialised now. The Municipality has been giving a monthly recurring grant to a homeopathic dispensary attached to the Katihar Ram Krishna Mission. It also affords facilities for accommodation of the municipal Harijan employees

Under the Second Five Year Plan, a sum of Rs. 1,50,000 was sanctioned to this Municipality as a loan for acquisition of lands and construction of a municipal market at a total expenditure of Rs. 4,77,000. The market has been constructed in part and further construction is now in progress.

FORBESGANJ MUNICIPALITY

Forbesganj Municipality was constituted in 1912. It extends over an area of 3.66 square miles and its population is 11,551 as per last census of 1951. The Municipal Board consists of 13 members out of which eleven are elected and two are nominated by Government.

Forbesganj Municipality appears to be very particular for the construction and maintenance of roads. This is the solitary municipality in the district which has constructed cement-paved roads within the municipal area in spite of nominal Government grant for this purpose.

About 1,300 students receive education up to middle standard in the municipal schools.

For maintaining the sanitary arrangements of the Municipality there are one qualified Sanitary Inspector, two Conservancy Inspectors and seven Jamadars. There is also one whole-time Vaccinator. The Water-supply Scheme is under execution and expected to be complete by the end of the financial year 1960-61.

The drainage system of this Municipality is fairly satisfactory for the present needs and the laying of a proper sewerage system is under consideration of Government for this Municipality.

The streets are lighted with electricity and in areas inaccessible to electric poles with kerosene oil lamps.

The sources of income and items of expenditure are the same as in the case of Katihar Municipality. A good percentage of revenue is spent on roads and education. Free education is imparted to girls up to the middle school and the Municipality meets the entire cost. The figures of income and expenditure in the last 5 years were as follows:—

Years.		Income.	Expenditure
		Rs.	Rs.
1954-55	..	1,97,793	2,16,517
1955-56	..	12,20,545	12,18,196
1956-57	.	2,15,558	2,14,578
1957-58	..	1.70,393	1,78,933
1958-59	..	2,26,570	2,28,128

TOWN PLANNING AND PUBLIC HEALTH.

The four towns of Purnea district, viz., Purnea, Kishanganj, Katihar and Forbesganj have been allowed to grow in a haphazard and oblique manner. It is unfortunate that no regular planning of the town for further growth has been put into operation. One of the reasons why the necessity of town planning has not been so much felt in the three towns excepting Katihar is that there was an abundance of land in the neighbourhood of the towns. As a result the towns were allowed to get fairly congested and then the satellite areas were allowed to grow up just as the inhabitants wanted.

There are all types of houses from huts, and thatched bungalows to *pucca* buildings. Slum areas are interspersed in between big houses. Urbanisation has been going on at a rapid pace because a remarkable circumstance about Purnea district is the comparative absence of emigration and immigration. An earlier description of Purnea town has been left by H. G. Cooke in his article on Purnea in the *Calcutta Review* of 1889. He observes: "The civil station of Purneah itself is remarkable for four Christian burial grounds, the Roman and English Churches having two apiece. Two are in the former civil lines, and two in the present station; there are, however, no monuments of conspicuous interest. The site of the old civil station was found unhealthy, and so it was transferred to its present position, which, however, is not remarkable for its salubrity. There is no building of any interest in the new station, and it is distinguished, above all civil stations I have ever seen, for its straggling proportions. The builders of the station had quite a passion for elbow-room, and it is almost necessary to lay darks when you go out calling. One house drifted quite out of the station in order, I believe, to escape municipal taxation, but the Municipality opened its generous arms wide and took the wanderer back within its enlarged boundaries."

The present town of Purnea has been largely urbanised because of the facility left by former builder who had the opportunity of keeping a huge "elbow-space" mentioned by Cooke The bungalows of the old generation of planters had very large compounds in some cases consisting of as much as 15 or 20 acres of land and these lands within the Municipality are now sold and are being utilised for new buildings. Twenty years back sitting on the verandahs of the District Magistrate's residence which is now the Circuit House in Purnea town, one could see vast stretches of green meadows and on one side it was almost a limitless stretch. But now in the neighbourhood of that very house, a large number of houses have been constructed including the colony of people working for the Kosi Project. In the town also which was not very congested before, a large number of *pucca* houses have been constructed in the last two decades. But Purnea town is still retaining the old pattern of having "*phus*" houses or thatched residences. It is a common saying that in Purnea town one starts with a "*kharau*" (thatched) and hut before he builds a "*pakau*" (*pucca*) house. Any scheme of town planning for Purnea town will have to face the problem of vast stretches of low lands, swamps and thick thorny hedges which differentiate this town from the other towns of this district. Just a few years before even within the limits of the municipal town, there used

to be thick thorny hedges on the sides of the main road leading to the Court where leopards could easily conceal themselves. The necessity for a regular town planning is not so much felt now but will have to be taken up sooner or later and it has got to be a very costly affair if the low-lying swamps within the town have to be tackled. Any proper scheme for town planning must cover the draining out of the swamps, eradication of water-hyacinth, filling up the ditches and building of planned tenements.

The necessity of town planning has become very keen in Katihar which has grown immensely of late. Besides being an important railway junction and therefore, ensuring a large railway colony, Katihar is also an industrialised town. The Jute Mills at Katihar in spite of their local problems and vicissitudes have brought in a large labour colony. Katihar is also a very big trading centre and has an important market. The town is a connecting link between West Bengal on one side and East Pakistan on the other side. Katihar has a direct railway route up to Jogbani on the border of Nepal and a considerable trade with Nepal is carried out through Katihar. After the creation of East Pakistan, the direct railway route from Calcutta to Darjeeling had to be diverted through Katihar as a part of the original route fell to East Pakistan. A more detailed description of the importance of Katihar as a railway junction has been given elsewhere. It can briefly be mentioned here that Katihar Railway Station has no sleep in the night as throughout the night important passenger trains are running through Katihar.

The importance of Katihar town was appreciated and a Magistrate used to be posted at Katihar which arrangement proved unsatisfactory and a separate subdivision was created as mentioned elsewhere with Katihar as the subdivisional headquarters. The Civil Courts at Katihar have been very much expanded. A section of the Bihar Military Police has been permanently stationed at Katihar. A large number of Government offices have now been located at Katihar All this has brought in an additional population to the town and the incidence of urbanisation has been strengthened.

Katihar is thus an industrial town, a big trading centre, a very important railway junction and is the headquarters of an administrative subdivision. The incidence of urbanisation of Katihar in the last two decades has been extremely rapid and uncontrolled which is shown by the extreme congestion, the

appalling slum areas, the location of red light areas near the railway station and the town, the quick extension of the town on what used to be the vegetable belt, etc., and a complete absence of what may be called a townscape. Even the general outlook of the railway colony which used to have ample elbow-space, parks and gardens before has been changed. The enormous increase of the railway population brought in the necessity of building more and more houses of different types within the space available to the railway administration and naturally the pleasant townscape has disappeared from the railway colony also. It is a pity that Katihar which has now a college, a number of schools for both boys and girls and a large general population has no avenue, no garden or park or any object of public interest. To one who does not belong to Katihar and has known Katihar since the last three decades and can appraise Katihar from a detached manner feels a groan as to what man can make of the material ends without any eye for the aesthetic. Sooner or later the problem of town planning has to be taken up for Katihar. The industrialisation has led to a beginning so far as the labour is concerned but nothing so far has been done for the middle class and the lower middle class people. No scheme of house-building loan advances for the middle class or lower income-group has been put into operation yet.

Regarding Kishanganj, it may be observed that of late the importance of the town has somewhat diminished. This is due to the fact that a portion of Kishanganj subdivision went over to West Bengal as a result of the recommendations of the State Reorganisation Commission. A portion of Kishanganj town itself has gone to West Bengal. A portion of Kishanganj subdivision has gone to the newly-created Katihar subdivision. All this has eclipsed, for the present, the importance of Kishanganj town.

This phase, however, will pass off in the course of one decade or so as the trade and commerce of Kishanganj and particularly the ever increasing importance of jute must go on increasing. Kishanganj town is also an ideal spot for the starting of a jute factory and other ancillary industries. The necessity for a town planning for Kishanganj cannot be put off for a long time. There is still space for the expansion of the town and the increasing incidence of urbanisation could be properly canalised into long-term plans. Kishanganj too has very little of townscape.

The growing townships of Forbesganj and Jogbani have also not received the benefits of a town planning. Forbesganj is, by far, the neatest of the towns in Purnea district and this place has also a future because of jute industry and its proximity to Nepal. Kasba, although a small town now, has also a good turnover of jute business. H. G. Cooke, District Magistrate of Purnea, had described Kasba in 1889 as follows:—

> "The town of Kusba, six miles north of Purneah, is the centre of the grain trade of the district, and affords a striking instance of the conservative character of the Indian trader. The reason for the place being originally selected as a grain depot and market, was obviously the same that determines such matters throughout India and the world, namely, facilities of transport to and from the market. These, in the case of Kusba, were formerly afforded by a river, but this river has long since silted up, and yet trade never left the place, though other sites affording the requisite facilities might have been readily found. Providence has now rewarded the constancy of the merchants of Kusba to their old town, by sending them the Assam-Behar Railway, which supplies the facilities which this important market has so long been devoid of."

This will show that probably Kasba had more importance before.

Araria was a village about 30 years back and the Courts were held in thatched buildings. Besides the Courts and the Government offices, Araria had very little other importance. Araria has a good health and the incidence of diseases is lower here than in the other towns. Araria has grown a lot and the Union Board can no longer tackle the problem of sanitation, etc., in the growing town. Araria has both elbow-space and a townscape. No planning has been enforced in the town yet.

Regarding public health measures in the urbanisation areas, details will be found in the Chapter on Public Health and Medical Services. It will be sufficient to mention here that there is practically no modern drainage system in any of the towns in the district. There is, however, an inadequate pipe water-supply arrangement in Purnea, Katihar and Kishanganj. Water-logging is a common sight in all the towns. There is no scheme for the

building of tenements to replace the slum areas. The schemes for building houses on loans given to the middle income and small income-groups are yet to be worked out in the towns.

DISTRICT BOARD.

The District Board of Purnea was constituted in 1885 in pursuance of the Bengal Local Self-Government Act, 1885. The earlier history of the Board follows the same pattern as in the District Boards of the other districts in North Bihar. A prominent feature of the earlier Board was the importance of the road cess which was the main source of income. The District Board of Purnea had another great advantage denied to most of the other Boards in North Bihar. Purnea district had an ample pasturage and thousands of cattle used to be brought here from other districts for grazing purposes. The vast pasturage that Purnea offered had also its limitations and the trespassing cattle used to be impounded. Purnea District Board had a very large number of cattle pounds and the income from the cattle pounds was a considerable source of income.

H. G. Cooke, District Magistrate of Purnea had contributed an article on Purnea in the *Calcutta Review*, no 176-April, 1889. In his article he mentions—

> "The district of Purneah with an area of 4,956 square miles is the third largest among the regulation districts of the province, and though its population in 1881 was shown to be 1,848,667, which is fully up to the average population of Bengal districts, yet by reason of its great area, it is with two exceptions the most thinly populated regulation district in the province. The cause of this is not far to seek, as the district is conspicuously a grazing one, affording pasturage to the cattle of adjoining districts as well as to countless herds of its own. This circumstance exercises a marked effect on the revenue derived from cattle pounds, which amounts to nearly half a lakh of rupees annually."

Another main function of the earlier district was the construction and maintenance of roads. It may be mentioned here that the Public Works Department functioned till 1946-47 only for the Government building in the district and for particular roadways. Particular attention was paid to the Ganges—Darjeeling Road which ran from Karhagola and went right up to

the limits of Kishanganj subdivision near about Tetaliya (now in East Pakistan) and then the road extended up to Darjeeling. Darjeeling district was for a long time a part of Bhagalpur Division. Mr. H. G. Cooke in the same article mentioned above has a fine descriptioi of Ganges—Darjeeling Road which is worth quoting *in extenso*:—

> "This road, which is over one hundred miles in length, is metalled throughout, and possesses interest on more than one ground. First it is remarkable as forming what must be one of the finest avenues in the world, from Carhagola on the Ganges to Silligoori. a distance of about 120 miles.* It is overshadowed by magnificent trees with scarcely an interval throughout, save when the broad waters of the Mahananda form a break in the communication, and in a few places where trees cannot be induced to grow. I think that even the opponents of the Hill exodus might abate some of their animus if they would try a drive on this road; for had it not been that it was found expedient to remove the Government to Darjeeling every year, this thing of beauty would never have existed. The traditions attaching to the route are not without interest: the poor little underfed and over-driven *tattoos* are no more, the ramshackle *shigrams*—as the species of *ticca gharis* that the *tattoos* had to drag were called—have disappeared; the skeletons of the latter, I believe, still haunt the neighbourhood of the Purnea Dak Bungalow. The various rest-houses on the road must have been occupied by the men who for generations guided the destinies of the province. How many sick women and children must have fled from death along this goodly avenue, possibly thinking it far too long, and failing to appreciate its beauties as they deserve to be appreciated! But we, who have leisure to admire it in the course of our residence in Purneah, are proud of its and feel a sense of gratitude to the spirit of the Hill exodus."

Although Ganges—Darjeeling Road did not form a direct responsibility, the District Board had to maintain the many feeder roads to this important roadway.

*The avenue exists in patches only now (P. C. R. C.).

The earlier Purnea District Board had another great responsibility and that was the maintenance of the many ferry *ghats*. Jute and grains had always been the main produce of the district and because of the sparse population, Purnea had to export practically all the jute produced and the bulk of the grains particularly rice. In the days of Cooke when the railway line between Dinajpur and Katihar was under construction and expected to connect when completed Northern Bengal and the Assam Bihar Railways, the boat traffic of the Mahananda was of vital importance. In those days Barsoe was an extremely important riverside station which collected almost the entire produce of jute of Kishanganj subdivision and exported it by boat. The river Kosi had also quite a number of important ferry *ghats*. In spite of the frequent inundation by the Ganga, Kosi and Mahananda there was always a brisk trade through the streams and rivers and without a good system of *ghats* and ferries trade was not possible when the railways were not developed and the only roadway for trade purposes was the Ganges—Darjeeling Road. Incidentally it may be mentioned here that because of the facility of the boat traffic even in the 9th decade of the 19th century, machinery had replaced manual labour in nearly every factory in the district as mentioned by Mr Cooke in the article referred to before. Cooke has mentioned that "Machinery has replaced manual labour in nearly every factory in the district, and two Purneah planters claim to have introduced valuable improvements in the process of manufacture The patent boilers and lever presses of Mr. F. Shillingford of Kolasi are well known, and Mr. Hill, an Assistant in the Gondwara concern, is the originator of the idea of bruising the plant before steeping; it is even alleged that the first wheel-beater ever erected was used in this district at the Dilowri Factory by the late Mr. Cruise in the year 1844. It cannot be said, therefore, that the Purneah planter has not kept pace with the times."

From the old records available it appears that the earliest District Board consisted of nearly 20 members from time to time. The District Magistrate was an *ex-officio* member of the Board and was the Chairman till the constitution was changed on the basis of Montagu-Chelmsford Report. Government servants and the European planters predominated on the Board while the land-holding class accounted for the rest. In 1924, the provisions of the Bihar and Orissa Amendment Act, 1923, came into force and the first election took place. The Chairman and the Vice-Chairman were henceforth non-officials and elected. In the

thirties the branch of the Indian National Congress came into prominence as a political body and a number of Congressmen got themselves elected to the Board and had a predominating influence for quite a long time. The last election of the Board was in 1948 when it was captured by Congressmen. There were no general elections after 1948 and the same Board as constituted in 1947 had continued till the Board was vested in Government in 1958.

O'Malley has given a detailed account of the District Board in the last *Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911).

In his time the District Board consisted of 25 members. The District Magistrate used to be an *ex-officio* member of the Board and was invariably its Chairman. There were other six *ex-officio* members, twelve were elected and six were nominated by Government. The land holding class and Government servants predominated among the members, the former representing 64 per cent, and the latter 28 per cent of the total number in 1908-09, while pleaders and *mukhtars* accounted for 4 per cent.

Under the District Board there were three Local Boards constituted for each of the then three subdivisions, viz., Purnea, Kishanganj and Araria.

The Montagu-Chelmsford Report (1919) recognising the shortcomings of an officialised body in local affairs proposed that the self-governing bodies should be as representative as possible. It was felt necessary to make the franchise as wide as possible and to replace the nominated Chairman by an elected non-official member. When the District Board was reconstituted on the basis of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report, the first non-official Chairman elected by the Board was the late Shri Nishikanta Sen, Advocate of Purnea. The number of members of the Board increased to 36. But one-fourth of the members of the District Board were still nominated by Government.

The franchise being of a limited character kept out the bulk of the people from exercising the right of franchise. Very little attempt was made by the candidates themselves to enlighten the electorate as to their rights and obligations. The last election of the Board was held in 1948 and the same Board continued till 15th September 1958 when all the District Boards of the State were taken over by the Government. The Local Self-Government

Act of 1950 tried to improve on the Bihar and Orissa Local Self-Government Act of 1924-25 which was passed on the model of recommendations made in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report. This Amendment emphasised for elected members and also made provision for the co-opted scheduled castes members (at least one member from each Local Board). But since no election was held after 1948 the Amendment only remained on paper so far as the District Board of Purnea was concerned.

It is unfortunate that the level of efficiency of the administration of the District Board slowly deteriorated along with the other District Boards of Bihar. The State Government had to take note of the disquieting administration. The constitution of the District Boards received a setback by the Ordinance no. VI of 1958, promulgated by the Governor of Bihar. This Ordinance was promulgated by the Governor of Bihar under clause (1) of Article 213 of the Constitution of India. In pursuance of Government notification no. 8001-L.S.-G., dated 12th September 1958, all the District Boards were taken over under the management of Government and the Boards' Executives and members have ceased to function with effect from 15th September 1958. Accordingly the Purnea District Board and Local Boards at Sadar, Araria and Kishanganj have been taken over by the District Magistrate, Purnea with effect from 15th September 1958 and later a Special Officer has been appointed for the administration of the Board and the arrangement still continues at the end of 1960. The failure to run the administration of the Board satisfactorily is very regrettable.

No fundamental change has come in the responsibilities of District Board from O'Malley's time. It is responsible for the maintenance of roads, bridges and roadside inspection and dak bungalows, public ferries and pounds and exercises control and supervision over primary and middle schools. But with the creation of the District Education Fund in 1954 under the Superintendent of Education, the District Board ceased to have control over the educational purse. It also manages a number of dispensaries, malaria and treatment centres and looks after sanitation and public health activities in the rural areas including provision for water-supply.

The area of the District Board was 4,86 square miles with a population of 24,30,352 according to 1961 census. But in pursuance of the recommendations of State Reorganisation Commission and the demarcation of boundaries between Bihar and

West Bengal, a total area of 759 square miles with a population of 2,77,288 was transferred to West Bengal in the month of October, 1956. As such the present area and population of the District Board stand at 4,104 square miles and 21,53,064 respectively. As a result of this boundary demarcation seven dispensaries under the management of Purnea District Board were transferred to West Bengal with all the staff and movable and immovable properties.

Income.

O'Malley writes about the income of Purnea District Board as follows:—

"The Purnea District Board is the poorest, i e., it has the smallest receipts, in the Division, though it has a larger area under its charge than the two other District Boards of Monghyr and Bhagalpur. Its average annual income during the 10 years ending 1901-02 was Rs. 1,79,000, of which Rs. 94,000 were derived from rates; and during the quinquennium ending in 1904-05 it amounted to Rs. 1,99,000. In 1908-09 the opening balance was Rs.. 90,000 and the income of the year aggregated Rs. 2,37,000, of which Rs. 1,05,000 were obtained from Provincial rates, and Rs. 51,000 from civil works, including Rs. 6,000 realised from tolls on ferries and Rs. 62,000 obtained from pounds. In Purnea, as in other Bengal districts, the road cess is the principal source of income; and the incidence of taxation is light, being only 11 pies per head of the population, a proportion lower than in any other district of the Division. The income from pounds is unusually important, but fluctuates considerably."

The Purnea District Board had an average annual income of the last ten years ending 1958-59 amounting to Rs. 21,39.902, of which Rs. 7,55,925 was derived from local rates. Road cess is the principal source of income and the other incomes represent Government grants for civil works, medical and water-supply purposes. A small amount is derived from pounds and ferries.*

The income of different heads for the last ten financial years is indicated below:—

*This is in great contrast to what H. C. Cooke, District Magistrate of Purnea, wrote in 1889 quoted before (P. C. R. C.).

Statement showing the actual receipts of Purnea District

RECE

(In

Serial no.	Heads.	1950-51.	1951-52.	1952-53.	1953-54.
1	2	3	4	5	6
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs	Rs.
1	Provincial rates ..	8,43,188·00	8,46,367·00	4,72,960·00	10,77,996·00
2	Interest ..	2,944·00	6,055 00	2,058·00	4,034·00
3	Law and Justice .	1,649·00	1,334·00	451·00	619·00
4	Medical and Public Health.	1,30,686 00	1,56,034·00	1,69,481·00	2,10,473·00
5	Scientific and other minor departments.	1,390·00	1,522·00	1,652 00	1,269·00
6	Miscellaneous including Press.	1,27,340·00	1,26,788·00	68,590·00	2,95,465·00
7	Civil works .	4,63,140·00	11,91,542·00	3,60,433·00	8,38,143·00
	Total ...	15,70,737·00	23,29,642 00	10,75,625·00	24,27,999·00

The following figures represent expenditure in the main

Statement showing the actual expenditure of Purnea

EXPEN

(In

Serial no.	Heads.	1950-51	1951-52.	1952 53.	1953 54
1	2	3	4	5	6
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs
1	G. A. Office III, Establishment Administration and contingencies.	345·00	1,46,526·00	1,21,972·00	1,50,995·00
2	Police	2,069·00	433·00	658·00	1,277·00
3	Contribution to District Education Fund.	1,90,915·00	1,81,969·00	2,03,534·00	2,67,317·00
4	Public Health including vaccination and water-supply.	2,03,184·00	2,91,357·00	2,47,768·00	2,52,996·00
5	Medical	2,55,895 00	2,06,253·00	2,38,487·00	2,85,172 00
6	Scientific and other minor departments.	34,516·00	63,203·00	38,200·00	57,838·00
7	Superannuation allowance and pension.	43,519.00	39,285·00	40,109·00	1,33,079·00
8	Stationery and printing ..	15,362·00	15,771·00	13,123·00	12,405·00
9	Miscellaneous	4,341·00	4,627·00	2,615·00	9·073·00
10	Civil works	11,10,258·00	3,92,828·00	4,27,046·00	7,47,278·00

Board for the years from 1950-51 to 1959-60.
IPTS.
rupees.)

1954-55.	1955-56.	1956-57.	1957-58.	1958-59.	1959-60.
7	8	9	10	11	12
Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
6,01,914·00	8,60,802·00	7,16,751·00	6,72,532 00	7,56,683·00	..
934·00	637·00	2,278·00			..
153·00	161·00	324·00	85 00	138·00	.
2,11,519·00	2,00,464·00	2 25,406·00	1,80,934 00	1,83,268·00	..
1,160·00	1,007·00	1,104 00	797 00	804 00	..
1,56,207 00	1,60,962·00	1,41,453·00	1,67,331 00	1,30,322 00	..
6,18,988·00	4,78,560 00	7,30,455·00	3,17,178 00	2,81,181 00	..
16,90,902 00	17,02,593·00	18,17,771 00	13,36,857·00	13,52,396 00	..

heads for the last ten years.—
District Board for the years from 1950-51 to 1959-60.
DITURE.
rupees.)

1954-55.	1955-56.	1956-57.	1957-58	1958-59.	1959-60.
7	8	9	10	11	12
Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1,31,481·00	1,08,525 00	1,29,696·00	1,27,884 00	1,11,772·00	..
1,104·00	547·00	1,519·00	1,139·00	674·00	..
4,96,661·00	9,192·00	50,423·00	66,097·00	..	..
2,55,815·00	2,99,871·00	2,43,324·00	2,64,339·00	2,63,586·00	..
3,17,139·00	2,19,704·00	[illegible]39,856·00	1,93,372·00	2,50,756·00	..
40,959·00	20,676·00	40,696·00	29,933 00	29,961·00	..
45,122·00	29,720·00	29,354 00	29,704·00	32,914·00	..
14,670·00	18,912·00	17,130 00	12,339·00	21,398·00	..
28,177·00	40,856·00	5,037·00	6,832·00	3,076·00	..
8,99,763·00	6,48,685·00	9,73,110·00	10,78,744 00	5,25,228·00	..

Under Government orders, all rents and taxes, fines, penalties, etc., were to be treated as revenue of the province with effect from 1st April 1939 and the Provincial Government would make voted grant-in-aid out of provincial revenues to the local authorities concerned in order to compensate them for the loss of their revenues. But this did not bring any change in the receipts of the Board.

The District Board maintains a number of Inspection Bungalows and Dak Bungalows which are well distributed over the district. It has to be remembered that in the olden days road journeys had to be performed in *tam-tam* (light one horse-drawn vehicle), bullock-carts, elephants, horses, etc. The bungalows were very necessary for the touring officers The places where the bungalows are located have been mentioned in the Chapter on Communications.

Purnea district had a bad reputation for enervating climate and dreadful diseases like malaria and *kala azar*. Purnea District Board had to provide relief to the sick persons. A start was made with eight dispensaries and the District Board used to contribute to certain other institution, viz., Purnea Sadar Hospital and few other joint dispensaries, hospitals at Katihar, Kishanganj and Forbesganj. With the increase in resources the medical facilities have steadily expanded. In 1956 the District Board maintained 47 dispensaries and 25 other Allopathic treatment centres under medical officers besides a large number of *Kaviraji*, *Unani* and Homoeopathic subsidised dispensaries Some of the important dispensaries have since been provincialised and taken over by Government, but the medical needs of the rural public are met more by the District Board through the rural dispensaries. Seven dispensaries have since been transferred in West Bengal due to transfer of some portions of Kishanganj subdivision.

The expenditure of the District Board over medical relief has increased from Rupees four thousand in the year 1901-02 to Rs. 2,89,885 in the year 1956-57. Indoor wards are provided in some of the dispensaries. The District Board spends on the average on each dispensary from Rs. 1,200 to Rs. 2,000 annually towards the cost of medicines and surgical stores according to the merit of the dispensary. The Medical Officers are allowed private practice which they do beyond prescribed dispensary hours. The Civil Surgeon is the technical advisor to the Board in matters of administration and management of the Medical Department. The Medical Officers are also entrusted with public health duties within five miles radius.

The District Board has eight veterinary dispensaries. The veterinary despensaries are at Amour, Katihar, Sonouli, Dhamdaha, Araria, Forbesganj, Kishanganj and Thakurganj

A statement showing the income and expenditure of the District Board veterinary dispensaries in the Purnea district for the last five years is given below:—

Years.	Income.			Expenditur
	Sale-proceeds from outdoor tickets.	Municipal grants.	Miscellanous	
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs	Rs
1955-56	955	11	...	20,676
1956-57	974	120	10	40,696
1957-58	676	120	1	29,933
1958-59	618	120	67	2[illegible],961
1959-60	671	...	..	3[illegible],407

In the year 1956-57 the expenditure is high due to arrear contribution towards the pay of Touring Veterinary Assistant Surgeons and also for the payment of veterinary drugs bills.

The District Board used to maintain a number of important metalled roads including the inter-provincial Ganga—Darjeeling Road They are now maintained by the Public Works Department. The Board now mostly maintains unmetalled and village roads. Details of roads have been given in the Chapter on Communications

The District Board is also maintaining a press. The press was established in the year 1939 It was started mainly with the object of printing the various District Board forms for which nc suitable press was available in Purnea. It has been further expanded in the year 1948 and takes outside jobs.

A statement showing the income and expenditure of the press for the years 1954-55 to 1957-58 is given below:—

Years.	Income.	Expenditure	Profit
	Rs	Rs.	Rs.
1954-55 ...	18,635	15,568	3,067
1955-56 ...	17,411	15,676	1,734
1956-57 ...	19,995	15,009	4,986
1957-58 ...	20,191	16,893	3,298

There is a District Board Club for the employees constructed to the eastern side of the District Board compound in 1938 which is a contribution of Raja P. C. Lall Chowdhury during his chairmanship of the Board.

LOCAL BOARDS.

The Local Boards constituted at Sadar, Araria and Kishanganj are under the control of the District Board.

In pursuance of Government notification no. 8001-L.S.-G., dated 12th September 1958, all the District Board's executives and members ceased to function. Accordingly the Purnea District Board and Local Boards at Sadar, Araria and Kishanganj have been taken over by the District Magistrate, Purnea with effect from September, 1958 and the arrangement continues.

UNION BOARDS.

The District Board has now only three Union Boards, viz., Kasba, Manihari, and Araria in place of 32 Union Boards functioning earlier and now abolished under Government notification as *Gram Panchayats* have been formed in most parts of the district. Two of the Union Boards, viz., Kasba and Araria have also *Panchayat* powers to try cases.

GRAM PANCHAYAT.

Bihar Gram Panchayat Raj Act was made a statute in 1947. The actual implementation of the scheme, however, started by the middle of 1949.

Gram Panchayats are very old institutions in this country and there was a time when disputes regarding land, domestic life and even complicated civil and criminal disputes used to be referred to the *Gram Panchayats*. The *Panchayat* meant a sort of committee of five or more of the village elders who would sit in an open place and both the parties would give their versions before the *Panch* and the *Panch* would take necessary evidence and come to a quick decision. With the spread of litigation and the availability of the courts, the villagers started taking their more important criminal and civil disputes to the court and the *Panches* were pushed to the position of occasionally meeting for domestic or social differences.

With the advent of independence the character of the Government was sought to be changed from that of a Police State to a Welfare State. It was appreciated that the cost of litigation had gone up very high and affected adversely the very economy

of the people. It was early realised that for ordinary civil and criminal disputes, there should be a revival of the old agency of the *Gram Panchayats* where there would be a lesser urge to bring out a concocted story in the presence of the villagers who are in the know of the matter. One of the objectives has been that the *Gram Panchayat* should be able to bring about amicable settlements more easily than the courts and enforce compromises The other aspect has been to implement the scheme of decentralised democracy. One essential characteristic of the British administration was that there was far too much of a centralized administrative machinery at the district or subdivisional headquarters. The main agency for the maintenance of law and order was the police and the magistracy The police were also the link for other types of work as well. There was, however, a big hiatus between the common man and the men who run the administration. This anomaly has been sought to be ironed out in the system of *Gram Panchayat.* More and more powers and obligations are being delegated to the *Gram Panchayats* so that the *Gram Panchayats* could come to be the effective agency for implementing the reforms of various types that are being introduced and would represent the nucleus of the administrative machinery at the village level.

The wide land reforms that have been implemented and the programme of further land reforms require an effective machinery at the village level. It is obvious that for land reforms to be effective the machinery must be formed at all levels. As mentioned in *Land Reforms in India* by H. D. Malaviya (1955), "And in matters agrarian the revenue officials at the village level are in many cases more vital than those at the higher rungs. And it is here that the reform of the revenue machinery is easy to achieve through the instrumentality of the village *Panchayats* which are now being reborn almost in all the States of the Union. The elected village *Panchayats* provide local leadership and initiative and are capable of producing that popular enthusiasm which is so essential for building up a new social and economic order. The village *Panchayats* have thus a very vital role to play in the sphere of land reforms and need all help and encouragement."

In Purnea the Bihar Gram Panchayat Raj Act, 1947 was enforced from 1949. Generally, a *Panchayat* is formed in an area which has a total population of 2,000 persons. Normally a number of villages falling within a radius of two miles are grouped together under one *Panchayat.* Government usually form an unofficial *Panchayat* in a village at the first instance and prescribe a target of constructive works. In the execution of the

constructive programme the villagers are expected to develop co-operation and self-help to solve their own local problems. When the unofficial *Panchayat* completes the target, it is recommended for being vested with statutory powers.

The *Gram Panchayat* is headed by a *Mukhiya* who is assisted by the Executive Committee consisting of 13 to 15 members elected on the basis of adult suffrage; the Executive Committee controls the annual budget and acts as a check on the *Mukhiya* The *Mukhiya's* post has become a coveted one in the village economy and it seldom goes uncontested

There is a panel of 15 *Panches* or members, which has a head known as the *Sarpanch*. The chief job of the *Sarpanch* is to preside over the *Gram Cutchery* meetings and to try cases with the help of a panel of two *Panches* who are selected by the contesting parties

The District Panchayat Officer is the administrative head of this institution and has to work under the superintendence, direction and control of the District Magistrate The institution went on developing and by 1952-53, there were three Subdivisional Supervisors of *Gram Panchayats* and two Instructors of Village Volunteer Forces to assist him. In the same year, the total number of trained *Gram Sewaks* in the district was 121. A *Gram Sewak* is a Government servant who acts as a bench clerk of the *Gram Cutchery* and the office assistant of the office of the *Mukhiya*. He is also in charge of collection of taxes of *Gram Panchayats*.

By the year 1958-59, Purnea district has been covered by a network of *Gram Panchayats* and there were altogether 630 *Gram Panchayats* in the district, the total number of notified *Gram Panchayats* was 571, while that of non-notified *Gram Panchayats* was 59. Full-fledged official *Gram Panchayats* were, however, not functioning in all the notified *Gram Panchayats* of the district because in all of them election had not been completed.

Powers and Duties.

The powers and duties of a *Gram Panchayat* may be roughly categorised into three parts—

(*i*) Revenue and development.

(*ii*) Judicial.

(*iii*) Police.

The functionaries of a *Gram Panchayat* also have been designed, more or less, in accordance with the different categories of works. Roughly speaking, the *Mukhiya* in his Executive Committee is in charge of revenue and development works, the *Sarpanch* along with a panel of *Panches* looks after the judicial works of a *Gram Panchayat* and the Chief Officer along with his Village Volunteer Forces is responsible for maintaining law and order and is responsible for other police works in the *Gram Panchayat*.

The Bihar Panchayat Raj Act, 1947 lays down in detail as to how the aforesaid functions will be done by a *Gram Panchayat* Sections 14 and 15 of the Act lays down as to what would be the function of a *Gram Panchayat*. There are some works such as sanitation and public health works including disinfection of wells, etc., maintenance of accurate account of crop and vital statistics, maintenance and construction of public street and village roads, protection and improvement of irrigation works, execution of such measures with regard to rural development schemes as the Government may direct, etc., which are compulsory in nature. There are other supplementary duties as detailed in section 15 of the Act which a *Gram Panchayat* has to do under the instructions of the Government. Recently, under Government instructions *Gram Panchayats* have been required to perform various works such as collection of rent, *chowkidari* taxes, maintenance of agricultural statistics, repair and maintenance of irrigation schemes, etc. Where N. E. S. Blocks have been established most of the development works are executed through the agency of *Gram Panchayats*.

Coming to the judicial side, the *Gram Panchayats* are expected to deal with criminal as well as civil cases They have been provided with necessary statutory powers under the Act so as to enable them to discharge their functions properly. Normally, *Gram Panchayats* are expected to make efforts to settle the cases amicably.

The Village Volunteer Force of the *Gram Panchayats* is headed by a Chief Officer who is appointed by the *Mukhiya*. This Chief Officer has to work as a leader of the younger group of the village and canalize their energy after proper training in such a way, so that the same may be utilised in performing various constructive work as well as maintaining law and order in the villages.

Financial Resources.

For the execution of the schemes and plans funds are necessary. The *Panchayats* have, therefore, been given adequate powers to raise local taxes, e.g., property tax, professional tax, etc. There is compulsory labour tax payable by all able-bodied males between the age of 18 to 50 years. The minimum tax payable by every tax-payer is 12 units or 48 hours of manual labour per annum. Cash payment in lieu of labour tax is permissible, in case of invalids or those who are incapable for manual labour. The proceeds of the tax are mainly utilised in development works. During the year 1958-59 *Gram Panchayats* of this district could raise local taxes as follows:—

Property tax.	Labour tax.	Supplementary tax.
Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
11,692.04	45,255 (Cash in place of L. T. Rs. 7,818.88).	755.08

These amounts and units of labour tax were utilised in executing various development works in the district. Besides Government also grant lump sum money to *Panchayat.*

Activities.

During the unofficial period some useful work is reported to have been done by most of the *Panchayats* of the district. The Kanki *Panchayat* in Kishanganj subdivision assisted the Local Board in construction work by giving Rs. 600 in cash to the Local Board and raising Rs. 500 in terms of voluntary labour. Similarly Kajha *Gram Panchayat* in the Sadar Subdivision has constructed a new road at a cost of Rs. 4,000 by raising voluntary subscription from the inhabitants of the *Panchayat.* Some attention was paid to village cleaning, sanitation and disinfection of wells. The *Gram Sewaks* of this district had inoculated and vaccinated thousands of persons and disinfected thousands of wells. The *Panchayats* of this district ran a large number of centres for adult education. A few dozen of village libraries have been started.

The *Gram Panchayats* of this district are also doing some social work. It has to be mentioned that traffic in girls in Purnea is to some extent carried on by the professionals. The *Panchayats* have engaged themselves in rescuing girls from the clutches of the prostitutes and the ruffians and assisted them to resettle.

The following reported figures show some of the important items of work done by *Gram Panchayats* by the year 1958-59:—

Compost pits dug.	Distributed fertilizer.	Wells.	Tanks.	Tanks repaired.	Ahar.
3,[illegible]83	2,756 mds.	345	32	57	9 miles.

Roads *Kutcha*.	Road repaired.	Drains.	Sockage pits.	Trench latrines.	*Kutcha* drains.	Persons vaccinated.
54 miles 454 yds.	78 miles 1,123 yds.	17	1,432	2,[illegible]57	4,782	22,933

Drains cleaned.	Wells cleaned.	Persons inoculated.
1,718	4,630	17,874

During the year 1958-59, rent collection work was done by 34 *Gram Panchayats* and the percentage of collection was fairly high. In the preceding year this district had to face an unprecedented drought. On this occasion *Gram Panchayats* of this district helped the administration in running relief schemes and fair price shops in the far flung interiors and gave necessary relief to the poor and indigenous population. In the year 1958-59 Blind Relief Camp was organised by the *Gram Panchayats* in which about few hundred patients received treatment. Since 1956 construction of Kosi Canal work is going on in this district in which as many as 23 official *Gram Panchayats* are taking part in construction of Kosi Canal work. Moreover, the *Gram Panchayats* have been participating under Government instruction in loan collection drives, etc.

By the year 1952-53, 31 *Gram Kutcheries* were functioning in the district. 288 cases both civil and criminal have been disposed of by the *Gram Kutcheries* during the year 1951-52. Most of the cases were amicably settled. The following figures will show the number of criminal and civil cases which came before the bench of *Gram Kutcheries* during the year 1958:—

Criminal cases.

No. of cases pending from previous year.	No. of cases received from S. D. O.	No. of cases filed.	No. of cases disposed of.	Pending.
603	16	4,360	3,323	1,856

Civil.

Pending from previous year.	No. of cases filed.	No. of cases disposed of.	Pending.
315	1,385	1,072	628

The number of cases pending both criminal and civil is rather large. The *Gram Kutcheries* could not bring about an amicable settlement in any appreciable number of cases.

Organisation of Village Volunteer Forces

Village Volunteer Forces have been organised in most of the notified *Panchayats*. The volunteers are expected to do night patrolling and assist the local police in the prevention and detection of crimes. The following figures will show the number of Village Volunteer Forces in this district by the year 1958-59:—

(1) Number of trained Chief Officer in the district—279.

(2) Total number of Village Volunteer Forces in the district—1,62,665.

The institution of *Gram Panchayat* is still in an early stage and a critical appraisal need not be attempted. When the larger institution of the District Board has failed and had to be taken over by the Government, the task of the *Gram Panchayat* is certainly difficult. But the human material available in smaller units under proper guidance is expected to yield better results. One essential feature is that the *Gram Panchayats* are to work in smaller units, among their own people and any pitfalls will be more quickly observed and acted upon. A fundamental idea of vesting the *Gram Panchayats* with the judicial powers was that the parties and their witnesses would have a greater urge to come up with the truth, as they are aware, the villagers are in the know of the matter and any incorrect deposition would bring in a social disapproval. That is why, the *Gram Panchayat* Courts have better facilities to bring about amicable settlements. They are expected to have a more intense feeling to see that their own money is well spent for their own purposes. The system of paying tax in the shape of voluntary labour is nothing new as decades before through voluntary labour, institutions like grain-golas, schools and libraries had been built. Unfortunately the urge to render any voluntary labour is not so

keen now. There has also been a somewhat unhealthy competition to get elected to the key posts in the *Gram Panchayat*. There is the danger of party factions affecting the *Panchayati* system. If the *Panchayats* become the playground for the rival factions with pulls on the opposite direction, the very objective of the *Gram Panchayats* will fail. On the other side, there is the complaint that the *Panchayats* should be got rid of official control as much as possible. This is a controversial issue into which one need not enter into. The *Panchayati* system is a great experiment which is in tune with the policy of more decentralisation of administration to local units The importance of the *Panchayati* system had been underlined by many seasoned administrators since a long time past. In his presidential address at the fifteenth session of the Indian National Congress in 1899 Mr. R C. Dutt, the great economist, scholar and administrator had extolled the *Panchayati* system and indicated what was needed to be introduced in our administration. Mr. R. C. Dutt had observed:—

"*Village Unions.*

I will begin with villages—because, as I have already said, in India the villager represents the nation. In village administration there is no touch between the rulers and the people, the only link between the administrators and the people in civil administration is the hated link of the Police. It is a misfortune and an administrative mistake that our District Officers should have so little direct touch with the villagers and their natural leaders, and should work so entirely through the Police. If there is distress in the land, the Police makes enquiries, if there is cholera epidemic in the land the Police distributes cholera pills, if a village tank has given way or the village water-supply dried up the Police reports and organises help, if a tree has been blown down and obstructs a village path (I have seen instances of this myself)', the villagers are powerless to help themselves until the Police comes and removes the obstruction. It seems to be a mockery that the very country which was the first to organise village communities, village *Panchayats*, and village self-Government, and cherished these institutions for 3,000 years, should be rendered so absolutely helpless and should be ruled through the undesirable agency of the Police. The mistake has been discovered and Village Unions have been

> formed or are in the course of formation in most Provinces in India. Make these Village Unions real centres of village administration in so far as is consistent with good government. Parcel out each subdivision into twenty or thirty Village Unions, entrust the Union Committees with the charge of village roads, village tanks, village drainage, village education, and village hospitals, and send over to them all petty civil and criminal cases, not for judicial disposal, but for amicable settlement. A great deal of expensive litigation and bad feeling in villages can thus be stopped, a great deal of useful work can thus be done, and what is more, the natural leaders of the village population will thus come in touch with the Subdivisional and District Administrators, and will form the agents of village administration in so far as they are fit to take that position. An unsympathetic system of rule through the Police will thus be replaced by a rule with the co-operation of the people themselves."

The scheme of Dutt in 1899 is being fulfilled now. Basically the present scheme is only an elaboration of his ideas. What was an utopia then has become a reality. The *Punchaits* have been a very great experiment and it is expected that the system will generate correctives to strengthen it and to make it a success

CHAPTER XIV.

EDUCATION AND CULTURE.

Francis Buchanan has left a somewhat diffusive account of the background of education and culture in Purnea district. His account of the district of Purnea in 1809-10 has been edited by V. H. Jackson and published by the Bihar and Orissa Research Society in 1928. Francis Buchanan mentions that a few *gurus* in principal towns keep public schools attended by from fifteen to twenty boys, "but in general the teacher is hired by some wealthy man who gives him wages and food, and commonly allows him to teach a few children belonging to his neighbours, but some refuse this accommodation". The languages were Hindi, Maithili and Bengalee He refers to the *Tirahuti* character in common use by the Maithilis He mentions that persons were usually taught to read the Persian or Arabic characters, as is practised in Europe, without being taught to write them, "which is made a separate study". He mentions that *Ramayana* of Tulsi Das in Hindi. *Rasvihar* composed by Bhriguram Misra of Mungger, *Sudama Charitra, Dan Lila* are some other books that were commonly read. Francis Buchanan mentions that Kalidas, Manabodh, Jaidev Misra are some of the poets that were widely read.

According to him there were at least 1,000 Persian-knowing people in the district "who were capable of conducting business more or less perfectly in that language". It is peculiar that he should find that the education of the *zamindars* and other proprietors of the land has been more neglected.

It is not known how far Francis Buchanan was right because much of what he mentions was based on heresay. He, however, mentions that there were no less than 79 *Pandits* who had obtained the title of *Adhyapaks.* He particularly mentions that *Jyotish* and *Agam Shastras* were practised. He mentions about the Darbhanga Raja paying attention to the education of *Pandits.* According to him the number of proper *Pandits* including the *Adhyapaks* was 247. "Sangskrita study" was particularly flourishing due to the patronage of Darbhanga Raj. Literature, Drama and Vocabulary were studied. He mentions that the Bengalee *Pandits* of the district study Drama, *Saraswat Kalp* and *Ratna Mala.* *Siddhanta* and Drama were studied by the Maithili Brahmans. Law was not only studied but some law books were

written by the Brahmans of Mithila The other subjects studied on which treatises had been published were Philosophy, Astrology, Metaphysics and Literature Regarding medicine, it was mentioned that "medicine is in a more creditable state than towards the east and there are three sets of practitioners who have at least the decency of being able to read I heard of 26 Bengaleese practitioners of this kind, the greater part of whom are Brahmans, but there are a few who by birth are physicians. Another sect, said to amount to 37 are all Brahmans, and are called Misra or Sakadwipi. All these reject totally the idle delusions of prayer (*Mantra*), and give medicine". He also mentions that there were five Muhammadan physicians, who seem to be little superior to the Hindus Such people were usually illiterate He also mentions that there were *Jurrahs* who profess to treat sores and tumours and use particular oils He caustically observes that the obstetrical art is in the possession of women of the lowest ranks, who assured him that they never attempted anything further than to secure the umbilical cord, and they professed a total ignorance of any means for promoting difficult labours Apparently, he referred to the *chamains*. There were also a very large number of persons who pretend to cast off the devil and to cure diseases and bites of serpents and were called *Ojha* and *Guni* It was not known how he could come to their number of 3,500. He further mentions that the *Ojhas* and *Gunis* near the capital are taxed from one to five rupees each This tax was removed by a Mr Ducarel Inoculation for small pox was practised and according to him 600 to 700 persons obtained a part of their living by giving inoculation.

Regarding the beginnings of western education and pioneer work done in the district, the following quotation from Hunter's *Statistical Account of Purnea* will be of interest:—

*"*Education Statistics.*—Education of all kinds, but particularly primary education, has been very widely diffused in Purnea District since twenty years ago, a most remarkable improvement having taken place in this respect within the last five years. This improvement is due to the recognition by Government of the existing village schools of the country, and the distribution to them of an adequate, but not too liberal, aid. The number of Government and aided schools has increased from 1 in 1856-57 to 6 in 1860-61, 12 in 1870-71,

*Statistical Account of Purnea by W. W. Hunter, Vol. XV, pp. 404—412.

and 347 in 1874-75. The total number of pupils has risen from 66 in 1856-57 to 319 in 1860-61; it fell to 288 in 1870-71, and again rose to 8,744 in 1874-75. There were also 183 private and unaided schools returned by the Inspector of Schools in 1874-75. These were subject to inspection, and were attended by an estimated number of 1,781 pupils, the average number attending each school being 9.

"The following comparative tables (pp. 406 and 407), compiled from the Reports of the Director of Public Instruction for 1856-57, 1860-61, 1870-71, show the number of Government and aided schools in the District in each of these years, the number of pupils attending them, the cost of education to Government, and the amount realized by fees or from private sources. The greatly increased proportion of the cost of education borne by private contributions, which has risen from £ 47,8s. 1¾d. in 1856-57 to £ 1,078, 17s. 0d. in 1874-75, testifies to the general interest which is now being taken by the people themselves in the cause of education. The cost of schools to Government has increased from £ 272 9s. 3½d., to £ 1741, 11s. 6¼d. The most marked improvement is in the aided vernacular schools, which have risen from 1 in 1870-71 to 329 in 1874-75; while the scholars in the same period have increased from 9 to 8,079. In 1874-75 the number of Government and aided schools amounted to 347, and the number of pupils to 8,744; of whom 5,067 were Hindus, 3,667 Muhammadans, and 10 of other denominations not separately returned. Regarding the social status of the pupils, 33 belonged to the upper, 766 to the middle, and 7,945 to the lower classes.

The total number of Government, aided, and private schools in Purnea District returned in 1874-75 by the Inspector of Schools, Behar Circle, amounted to 512, and the estimated number of pupils attending them was 9,860; this would give 1 school to every 9.68 square miles of area, and 1 to every 3,349 of the population, attended by 1 student for every 174 of the population. Excluding the 7 girls' schools, attended by 109 pupils, the result shows 505 schools

for the male population attended by 9,751 boys. Taking the male population at 876,320, this gives 1 school for every 1,735 males, and 1 boy attending school for every 89.87 of the male population.

"The tabular statement of schools in 1874-75 given on p. 408, supplied to me by the Inspector of Schools, exhibits the state of public instruction in a somewhat different form, and indicates the number of unaided schools and pupils in the District.

Return of Government and Aided Schools in Purniah District for the years 1856-57, 1860-61 and 1870-71.

Classification of schools.	Number of schools.			Number of pupils.											
				Hindus.			Muhammadans.			Others.			Total.		
	1856-57.	1860-61.	1870-71.	1856-57.	1860-61.	1870-71.	1856-57.	1860-61.	1870-71.	1856-57.	1860-61.	1870-71.	1856-57.	1860-61.	1870-71.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1. Government English School ..	1	1	1	41	51	32	25	22	11	...	1	5	66	74	48
2. Government Vernacular Schools	..	5	8	...	155	89	...	90	108	...	..	...	...	245	197
3. Government Institution for Special Education.	...		1	...	...	2	..	...	9	...	...	...	...	...	11
4. Aided English School ...	...	...	1	..	...	8	...	...	15	...	...	...	..	...	23
5. Aided Vernacular School ...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	9	...	...	...	...	...	9
Total ...	1	6	12	41	206	131	25	112	152	...	1	5	66	319	288

Return of Government and Aided Schools in Purniah District for the years 1856-57, 1860-61 and 1870-71—concld.

Classification of schools.	Cost to Government.			Amount realized from fees and private contribution.			Total cost.		
	1856-57.	1860-61.	1870-71.	1856-57.	1860-61.	1870-71.	1856-57.	1860-61.	1870-71.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1. Government English School.	272 9 3½	293 2 5½	261 12 0	47 8 1¼	45 10 0	65 0 10½	319 17 5¼	338 12 5½	326 12 10½
2. Government Vernacular Schools.	...	31 6 10	184 4 0¼	...	23 2 1½	29 19 5¾	...	54 8 11½	214 3 6
3. Government Institution for Special Education.	...	...	242 19 0½	...	...	...	...	...	242 19 0½
4. ~~Aided English School~~	...	...	53 13 4½	...	...	78 8 6½	...	...	132 1 11½
5. Aided Vernacular School	...	...	3 10 0	...	...	1 4 0	.	...	4 14 0
Total ...	272 9 3½	324 9 3½	745 18 5½	47 8 1¼	68 12 1½	174 12 10¾	319 17 5¼	393 1 5	920 11 4½

Return of Schools in Purniah District in 1874-75.

Description of schools.	Number of schools on 31st March 1875.	Number of pupils attending on the 31st March 1875	Average attendance.	Number of Masters.	Receipts.			Total cost.
					Fees and fines.	Government Grant.	Local subscription.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
					£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Higher School—Government ..	1	112	69	5	99 0 10½	225 17 10½	4 2 0	329 0 9
Middle Schools—								
Aided English ..	4	139	91	11	18 16 6	201 8 10¾	245 12 7½	465 18 0
Unaided English ..	4	48	39	4	..	..	57 0 0	57 0 0
Government Vernacular.	5	270	195	10	16 19 7½	88 12 5¾	5 8 0	111 0 1½
Total ..	13	457	325	25	35 16 1½	290 1 4½	308 0 7½	633 18 1½
Primary Schools—								
Aided	329	8,079	6,998	331	533 15 6½	916 5 6¾	121 0 6½	1,571 1 ¾
Unaided . ..	182	1,731	1,416	182	263 2 7	..	114 12 0	377 14 7
Total ..	511	9,810	8,414	513	796 18 1½	916 5 6¾	235 12 6½	1,948 16 2¾
Normal School—Government.	1	35	34·8	2	..	241 3 7	...	241 3 7
Girls School—Aided Girls' School ..	7	109	97	7	..	13 10 1½	..	13 10 1½
Total—Government and Aided.	347	8,744	7,484·8	366	668 12 6½	1,686 18 6½	376 3 1¾	2,731 14 2½
Total—Unaided ..	186	1,779	1,455	186	263 2 7	..	171 12 0	434 14 7
Grand Total ..	533	10,523	8,939·8	552	931 15 1½	1,686 18 6½	547 15 1¾	3,166 3 9½

"*Primary Education.*—There has been a remarkable increase in the amount and quality of this order of education given in Purniah District during the five years ending 1875. The following figures are derived from the Report of the Deputy-Inspector of Schools for the official year ending the 31st March 1875 On that date there were in the District 315 aided *pathsalas*, 14 *maktabs*, and 7 girls' *pathsalas*, attended by 7,742 boys, 337 boys, and 109 girls respectively; the average daily attendance being 6,772, 266, and 97 respectively. At the close of the previous year there were 226 *pathsalas*, 25 *maktabs*, and 6 girls' *pathsalas*, so that in the short period of one year 124 *pathsalas* and 2 girls' schools had been established, of which 30 were newly founded, and 96 were old village schools to which aid had been given During the same period, 37 *pathsalas*, 9 *maktabs*, and 1 girls' school had been abolished on account of the falling off in attendance and the indifference of the cultivating classes to the education of their children Of the above existing schools, there were in the Headquarters Subdivision 172 boys' schools and 1 girls' school; in the Arariya Subdivision there were 94 boys' schools and 5 girls' schools, and in the Krishna ganj Subdivision there were 63 boys' schools and 1 girls' school The distribution of these schools according to the police circles in which they were situated, and the languages taught in them, is as follows.—In the Headquarters police circle—Hindi, 47 boys' schools and 1 girls' school, total 48 Amur-Kasba—Hindi, 33 boys' schools, Bengali, 3 boys' schools and no girls' school; total, 36 Gondwara—Hindi, 18 boys' schools and no girls' school Kadba—Hindi, 29 boys' schools; Bengali, 4 boys' schools and no girls' school; total 33. Manihari—Hindi, 5 boys' schools, Bengali, 3 boys' schools; total 8. Damdaha—Hindi, 10 boys' schools; total, 10. Balrampur—Hindi, 9 boys' schools; Bengali, 11 boys' schools, total, 20. Arariya—Hindi, 52 boys' schools, Hindustani or Persian, 1 boys' school and 3 girls' schools; total, 56. Matiyari—Hindi, 18 boys' schools and 1 girls' school; total 19. Raniganj—Hindi, 23 boys' schools and 1 girls' school; total, 24. Krishnaganj—Hindi, 7 boys' schools; Bengali.

1 boys' school; Hindustani or Persian, 1 boys' school; total, 9. Bahadurganj—Hindi, 22 boys' schools; Hindustani or Persian, 6 boys' schools and 3 girls' schools; total, 31. Kaliaganj—Hindi, 16 boys' schools; Bengali, 3 boys' schools; Hindustani or Persian, 3 boys' schools and 2 girls' schools; total, 24 Classed according to merit, they do not show a high state of proficiency, only 26 *pathsalas* being ranked as good, 39 as fair, 82 as moderate, 131 as indifferent, and 58 as bad. Of the total number of pupils before mentioned, 1,550 boys and 9 girls could read and write easy sentences in their mother tongue. Still, the progress in numbers of pupils and regularity of attendance has been very great; and it would seem from the educational reports that the matter and quality of instruction have improved also. The old village schools were held in the house of some leading man, a landholder or a merchant; and the teacher was expected to devote his chief attention to the children of this man, who was his patron. A few boys were also admitted from outside; but it is evident that many more reasons operated to prevent their attendance than in the case of a public school. The teacher also often performed other offices for his patron, and consequently the time of instruction varied much from one to another hour of the day, as well as in duration.

"Under the present system of supervision, combined with Government aid, there has been a great change. Registers of the attendance of pupils are regularly kept, and the boys are divided into classes. The *gurus* are obliged to teach from 6½ to 10 in the morning, and again from 2 to 5 in the afternoon. Measures have also been taken that during the slack period of the rainy season the teachers should improve themselves, either by attending the normal school or by private studies. There were 97 aided *pathsalas* and 19 *maktabs*, with 2,273 boys, on the 31st March 1873, before the *pathsala* system came into force. The number of aided primary schools at the close of the year 1874-75 was 336, with 8,188 pupils, against 257 schools, attended by 5,841 pupils, on the same day of the year 1873-74. In other words, the number of schools and of pupils

attending them has increased by 220 schools and 5,915 pupils respectively within the period of two years, and by 119 schools and 2,346 pupils within the year, 1874-75. The average daily attendance of pupils rose from 4,702 to 7,095 within the latter period.

"It has been observed that in all the primary schools, excepting those in the eastern parts of the District—that is, in police circles Manihari, Kadba, Balrampur, and Krishnaganj—Hindi-Kaithi is the only language taught; except that in some of the *pathsalas* the writing of the Deva Nagari character is also acquired. In such schools the teachers employed are trained men, from the middle vernacular and Purniah normal schools. The language taught in *pathsalas* in eastern part of the district is the corrupt form of mixed Hindi and Bengali, spoken by the residents of those places. In all the *pathsalas* within the limits of the Araria Subdivision, Hindi-Kaithi is taught, but there are 5 *pathsalas* in which Deva Nagari has been also introduced. In the schools within the jurisdiction of the Krishnaganj Subdivision, the Hindi, Bengali, Persian, and Hindustani languages are all taught, according to the wants of different local communities. Besides these languages, arithmetic up to simple division, practical *bazar* accounts, including *kharidbikri* or book-keeping by single entry, and mensuration on the native system, are practised.

"The total expenditure during 1874-75 on all primary schools amounted to £ 981, 19s. 1¼d contributed by Government and £ 694, 12s 10½d. derived from private subscriptions. The average annual grant-in-aid to each primary school was £ 2, 18s. 5¼d from Government, in addition to £ 2, 1s. 4¼d. from private sources. The Government grant to teachers was reduced or raised according to the efficiency of the schools, and the amount of their private income At the end of 1875, in the Headquarters Subdivision, there were 10 schools receiving grants-in-aid at the rate of 10s a month, 2 schools at the rate of 9s. a month, 14 at the rate of 8s. a month, 8 at the rate of 7s., 121 at the rate of 6s., 14 at the rate of 5s., 2 at the rate of 4s. and 1

school at 3s. a month. In the Arariya Subdivision, there were 2 schools receiving grant-in-aid at the rate of 10s. a month, 3 at the rate of 8s., 2 at the rate of 7s., 36 at the rate of 6s., 1 school at 5s. 6d. a month, 23 at 5s., 23 at 4s, and 4 at 3s. a month In the Krishnaganj Subdivision there were 12 schools receiving grant-in-aid at the rate of 10s. a month, 20 at the rate of 8s., 23 at the rate of 6s, 2 schools at 5s., and 6 at 4s. a month. In the whole district, there were 24 schools receiving grant-in-aid of 10s. a month, 2 receiving 9s a month, 37 receiving 8s., 10 receiving 7s, 180 receiving 6s., 1 receiving 5s. 6d., 39 receiving 5s, 31 receiving 4s, and 5 schools receiving 3s. a month. The rate of aid to the girls' *pathsalas* is one rupee or 2s., for every five girls attending.

"Of the aggregate number of pupils in the aided primary schools, 4,702 were Hindus, of whom 20 belonged to the upper classes, 380 to the middle, and 302 to the lower classes; and 3,486 were Muhammadans, of whom 11, 166, and 3,309 belonged respectively to the upper, middle, and lower classes.

"There were 4,318 boys who paid from 1 to 4 annas or 1½d to 6d a month to the *gurus*, according to previous custom, independent of the salary received by the *gurus* from Government A large number of the villagers, however, have withdrawn their support, and others have reduced the amount of fees which they before paid, since the grant-in aid system has been applied.

"In the Headquarters Subdivision there were 50 certificated teachers, and 125 employed without a certificate—total 175; in the Arariya Subdivision there were 23 certificated teachers, and 80 employed without a certificate—total 103, in the Krishnaganj Subdivision there were 16 certificated teachers, and 48 employed without a certificate—total 64. Total number of teachers in Purniah District was 342 Of these, 35 were classified as good, 39 as fair, 93 as moderate, 122 as indifferent, and 53 as bad.

"During the year 1874-75 there were 66 houses built or made over to schools by the *zamindars* and others who took an interest in education; and there were

at the end of the year 166 houses for the accommodation of the *pathsala* boys, of which 53 are in the Headquarters Subdivision, 65 in Arariya, and 48 in Krishnaganj.

Educational Census.—The following paragraphs give the results of an Educational Census carried out in two large villages in each subdivision of the district. In one of the villages in each subdivision a school had been for some time in existence, and the other had no such educational advantages."

The following quotation from the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* by L. S. S. O'Malley will show the trend of educational progress till 1908:—

*"*Progress of Education.*—Education is not widely diffused in Purnea, the census of 1901 showing that only 1,827 persons were able to read and write English, while the total number of persons returned as literate, i.e., able to read and write in any language, was 55,591, representing not more than 3 per cent (5.7 males and 0.1 females) of the population. This educational backwardness may be accounted for by several causes. Progress is impeded by the fact that a considerable part of the country is under water for a portion of the year and access from village to village is difficult, if not impracticable. A second influence is the unhealthy climate of the district, schools being deserted during outbreaks of fever and cholera. Lastly, the people are mainly agriculturists, and it is common for boys of school-going age to help in the fields or graze cattle from morning till evening instead of attending school.

"In spite of these drawbacks, there has been a marked advance in the last 30 years. In 1870-71 there were only 12 Government and aided schools, attended by 288 pupils; but after 1872-73 there was a remarkable improvement, owing to the introduction of Sir George Campbell's scheme of vernacular education, by which Government recognized the existing village schools and aided them by adequate but not too liberal grants. In 1880-81 the number of schools had increased to 698 with 9,150 pupils, and in 1890-91 the number of the former rose to

*O'Malley's *District Gazetteer, Purnea*, 1911, pp. 178—180.

975 and of the latter to 16,012, the decade thus showing an increase of more than 28 per cent, in schools and 42 per cent in scholars. But little advance was made in the next ten years, for the returns of 1900-01 showed 973 schools with an attendance of 18,967 pupils.

"In 1908 there were 919 educational institutions with 19,884 pupils on the rolls, viz., 766 public institutions with an attendance of 18,445 pupils and 153 private institutions with an attendance of 1,439. The number of boys receiving instruction was 18,057, representing 12.5 per cent of the boys of school-going age. The number both of schools and pupils has been falling off every year since 1904-05. The decline is attributed to epidemics of cholera, small-pox and fever, to the high price of foodgrains, which deters people of the middle classes from maintaining a *guru,* and to the rise of wages, caused by the expansion of the jute trade and the construction of railway lines. It is reported that, owing to this increase in the rate of wages, the teachers in village schools do not hesitate to throw up an avocation which brings them in but a small income.

"The inspecting agency consists (in 1908) of a Deputy Inspector of Schools, seven Sub-Inspectors and two Assistant Sub-Inspectors.

"*Secondary Schools.*—There are three High schools in the district, which had 365 scholars on the rolls on the 31st March 1908. One of these, the Purnea Zila School, is maintained by Government, and the other two, viz., the high schools at Araria and Kishanganj, are aided by it. There were in the same year seven Middle English schools with 412 pupils on the rolls, but one, an unaided school at Champanagar, has since been closed. Of the other six schools, two, in Purnea City and Katihar, are aided by Government, and four, situated at Barsoi, Churli, Forbesganj and Manihari, are aided by the District Board. The number of Middle Vernacular schools, is six and the attendance at them 331; five of these latter schools at Abadpur, Amtola, Dasgram, Dholbaja and Kasba, are managed by the District Board, and one, at Patni, is aided by it.

"There are thus 16 Secondary schools with 1,108 pupils, the average attendance at High schools being 122, at Middle English schools 60, and at Middle Vernacular schools 48. It is apparent that secondary education has not made much way among the people. A large proportion of the population consists of Muhammadans, who are willing to give their children a primary education, but have no desire for them to advance to higher standards. Among Hindus, the low castes are numerous, and with them also higher education is not in demand.

"*Primary Schools*.—Altogether, there are 651 Primary schools for boys attended by 14,353 boys and 1,158 girls, the average number of pupils in each school being 21. Of these schools, 70 are Upper Primary schools, 5 being managed by Government, 64 being aided and one being unaided. Of the 581 Lower Primary schools, 400 receive grant-in-aid and 181 are unaided. It is estimated that 10.6 per cent of the boys of school-going age receive primary instruction. Three night schools have also been opened, but they are merely Primary schools held in the evening for persons who work in the day and wish to get some knowledge of writing and accounts. The only school of this class calling for special mention is the Railway Night School at Katihar, which has been established for railway drivers and employees. There is now (1908) one Primary school to every 5 villages and to every 7.7 square miles.

"*Girls' Schools*.—For the education of girls 27 Primary schools have been opened, but only 499 girls read at them. All these schools are Lower Primary schools, and two of them are Model girls' schools. There are also 1,174 girls reading in boys' schools, so that the total number of girls under instruction is 1,673.

"*Other Schools*.—Six training schools for the instruction of Primary school teachers have been opened at Barsoi, Kishanganj, Korha, Purnea, Rajokhar and Ramganj, but only 65 teachers study at them. It is reported that the district is so backward, and the people so averse to leaving their homes, that it is with great difficulty that the *gurus* can be induced

to join training schools. There are no industrial or technical schools. The number of private institutions is 153, including 42 *maktabs*, 26 Koran schools and one Sanskrit *tol*. There are also 65 *maktabs* with 1,218 pupils, and one *madrasa* with 44 pupils at Muhamdia, which comply with departmental standards and are therefore classed as public institutions. At the *madrasa* instruction is given in Arabic and Persian, and poor boys receive a free education.

"*Education of Muhammadans*.—The total number of Muhammadans attending schools of all classes in 1908 was 8,996, representing 45.2 per cent of the total number of scholars. As the proportion of Muhammadans to the population is 42.3 per cent it would appear that they are not behind the Hindus in their appreciation of the advantages of education. As a rule, however, they are not in favour of any higher standard than the Primary; and in Secondary schools the proportion of Muhammadans falls to 25.9 per cent".

The table below gives an indication of the progress of Secondary Education between the years 1910 and 1957:—

Kind of institution.	Years.											
	1910.		1920.		1930.		1940.		1950.		1957.	
	No. of schools.	No. of scholars.	No. of schools.	No. of scholars.	No. of schools.	No. of scholars.	No. of schools.	No. of scholars.	No. of schools.	No. of scholars.	No. of schools.	No. of scholars.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
High schools and Post-Basic schools for boys.	3	505	4	743	6	1,463	12	3,261	25	6,781	36	8,613
High schools for girls.	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	105	2	359	2	449
Middle schools and Senior Basic schools for boys.	12	945	21	1,520	34	3,515	78	11,316	107	17,035	149	22,048
Middle schools for girls.	..	..	..	..	1	75	3	287	5	1,018	6	1,062

The above table clearly shows the increase in the number of schools and scholars during the last 47 years. Details are discussed below.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

In the year 1908 there were 651 Primary schools for boys having 14,353 boys and 1,158 girls on roll. The average number in each school was about 21. Out of those schools, 70 were U. P., 5 being managed by Government, 64 aided and 1 unaided schools. Again out of 581 L. P., 400 were grant-in-aid and the rest 181 were unaided schools. In addition to those schools there were 3 night schools which were held in the evening for the persons who did not get time during day. In short, there was one Primary school for every 5 villages and for every 7.7 square miles. So far the education of the girls was concerned there were 27 Lower Primary schools with 499 girl students on roll in addition to that 1,174 girls were reading in the boys' Primary schools. Thus there were 1,673 girls under instruction in all types of Primary schools in the district.

The following table will show the gradual development in Primary Education from 1910 to 1957 in this district:—

Kinds of schools.	Years. 1910		1920		1930	
	Schools.	Scholars.	Schools.	Scholars.	Schools.	Scholars.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Primary including Basic Schools for boys.	813	22,060	1,202	31,606	1,311	43,644
Primary Schools for girls	57	1,126	171	3,717	109	2,476

Kinds of schools.	Years. 1940		1950		1957	
	Schools.	Scholars.	Schools.	Scholars.	Schools.	Scholars.
1	8	9	10	11	12	13
Primary including Basic Schools for boys.	1,335	51,444	1,420	57,345	1,490	76,268
Primary Schools for girls	186	5,807	128	4,755	157	7,462

It is clear from the above figures that the number of boys' schools and scholars went on increasing year after year. During the last 47 years a number of eventful schemes of improvement and expansion of Primary Education was recorded. In 1957 there was one Primary school for every 2.3 square miles.

Professional and Technical Schools and Colleges, Legal and Medical, Engineering, Technological, Commercial Education.

In 1908 there were 6 training schools namely at Barsoi, Kishunganj, Korha, Purnia, Rajokhar and Ramganj for the proper training of the teachers. But there were only 65 trainees on roll. The reason for such a poor strength was due to the fact that the district being backward the teachers never wanted to leave their house in order to join a course of training.

The comparative figures regarding number of institution and the number of trainees is given below:—

Types of institutions.	Years.											
	1910		1920		1930		1940		1950		1957	
	Institutions.	Scholars.	Institutions.	Scholars.	Institutions.	Scholars	Institutions.	Scholars.	Institutions.	Scholars.	Institutions.	Scholars.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Senior Training Schools	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	117	1	165
Junior Training Schools	6	78	6	93	6	98	4	75	2	87	2	185
Hindi Training Schools	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	30	1	30

The above table shows a decrease in the number of Training schools whereas the number of trainees has increased during this period. It is a fact that there is a very great dearth of trained teachers in the schools. One Agriculture school has been started in Purnea a few years back. There were only 69 scholars on roll in 1957. The aim of this institution is to train the students in the new methods of agriculture and the use of new and improved form of implements of agriculture. The trainees after being trained help agriculturists in adopting improved methods of agriculture specially in Blocks.

COMPULSORY PRIMARY EDUCATION.

The Scheme of Compulsory Free Primary Education has been introduced in the Purnea Municipality in 1940. The number of boys' schools in 1950 was 11 which rose to 24 in 1957. The number of pupils rose by 624 in 1950 to 2,225 in 1957. Out of the total population only 53 per cent attended the schools in 1950, whereas 96 per cent attended the schools in 1957. The percentage of daily attendance in 1950 was 72 per cent which rose to 89 per cent in 1957. One Attendance Officer is in charge of this work in this Municipality. It is, however, believed that all the eligible boys for this Compulsory Primary Education are not taking advantage of the same for free Primary Education. The scheme is not being properly enforced.

GIRLS' EDUCATION.

In the year 1908 there were only 27 Lower Primary schools for girls having 499 students on roll, besides that 1,174 girls were reading in all types of boys' Primary schools. Thus there were 1,673 girls under instruction at the Primary stage in the district. But later on girls' education has shown a steady progress than the previous years. The number of institutions has increased to 165 with an enrolment of 8,964 in 1957. The following table will show the number of institutions and girls during 1957 at the various stages:—

Kind of institution.			No. of institution.	Enrolment.
High School	...	...	2	440
Middle School	...	...	6	1,062
Primary School	...	...	157	7,462
	Total	...	165	8,964

According to the above table there were 165 institutions for girls with an enrolment of 8,964. Co-education has become

quite popular. In order to encourage girls' education, Primary Education for them has been made free in Secondary schools also. Free studentship, stipends, scholarships and other financial concessions are granted to the meritorious girl students.

SCHOOLS FOR THE CULTIVATION OF FINE ARTS.

There is no recognised institution for cultivation of fine arts in this district. Music is taught in some High schools of the district for which grant is given to encourage the art of music among the students Girls are particularly encouraged to learn music and music teachers are posted in girls' High schools

ORIENTAL SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES.

Oriental schools, *Tols* and *Maktabs* were in existence in the past. The following figures will show the comparative figure of such institutions and scholars:—

Types of institutions.	Years.											
	1910		1920		1930		1940		1950		1957	
	Institutions.	Scholars.	Institutions.	Scholars.	Institutions.	Scholars.	Institutions.	Scholars.	Institutions.	Scholars.	Institutions.	Scholars.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Sanskrit *Tols*	3	42	1	22	6	154	9	209	9	173	3	234
Sanskrit *Pathshalas*	..	..	..	..	10	237	10	262	12	788	12	758
Madrasas	3	231	3	67	3	48	6	364	9	268	12	841
Maktabs	134	2,749	311	6,908	390	26,459	399	27,078	358	16,553	316	18,246

There are no schools for the handicapped, deaf and dumb or the blind.

SOCIAL EDUCATION.

In the year 1929 the Government had sponsored a scheme known as the "Mass Literacy Campaign". It had made some headway. The original scheme was reorganised. The programme under this Reorganised Scheme of Social Education was based on a sevenfold programme—

(*i*) Education and Literacy.

(*ii*) Cleanliness and Sanitation.

(*iii*) Health and Medical Aid.

(*iv*) Culture and Recreation.

(*v*) Reforms in social customs and behaviours.

(*vi*) Economic betterment.

(*vii*) Publication and publicity.

The Mass Literacy Committee was abolished and the Adult Education Board for the district was formed. Literacy Centres were started in High and Middle schools, district jail and factories In 1950, this scheme was again reorganised. This modified scheme gave emphasis on the literacy work and dissemination of useful knowledge among the masses. *Mod-Mandalis* were established to educate the people through the medium of entertainment The people were sought to be usefully entertained through dramatic performances, popular lectures, *Kathas* and *Kirtans* organised by the *Mod-Mandalis*. A number of Radio sets were supplied on subsidy basis to the institutions interested in the uplift of the Social Education.

The following table will show the comparative figures regarding the enrolment in the Social Education Centres:—

Types of institution.	Years. 1910 No. of centres.	1910 No. of adults.	1920 No. of centres.	1920 No. of adults.
1	2	3	4	5
Social Education Centres	3	68	26	430

1930 No. of centres.	1930 No. of adults.	1940 No. of centres.	1940 No. of adults.	1950 No. of centres.	1950 No. of adults.	1957 No. of centres.	1957 No. of adults.
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
16	361	12	291	121	4,650	491	32,918

CULTURAL SOCIETIES.

Cultural and Literary societies have been organised in every High, Middle and Basic institution of the district. The students usually take part once in a week or on special occasions like Independence Day, Republic Day, etc. Besides this, there is the District Literary Society in which educated members are expected to take part to promote for the progress of literature of the district.

LIBRARIES, MUSEUM, BOTANICAL AND ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS.

It was the post-war scheme of the Government to start district and subdivisional headquarters libraries. So far only the district headquarters library has been started. Government sanction grants to some of the other public libraries of the district every year on the recommendation of the District Library Committee. The number of public libraries in the district is very poor and confined to the subdivisional towns and some big villages. The average figures of the daily readers could not be ascertained. Spot investigation shows that there are very few libraries that are well patronised by the public. There are no museum, botanical or zoological garden in this district.

INSPECTING AGENCIES.

There were only one Deputy Inspector of Schools, seven Sub-Inspectors of Schools and two Assistant Sub-Inspectors of Schools in the district in the year 1908. But later on due to social and economic changes and pressure for more education a new approach towards planning was made which resulted in creating more and more posts for the proper control, supervision and guidance of the educational institutions. The following table will give a comparative picture of the Inspecting Officers of this district:—

Designation of Officers.	Years.					
	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1957
	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
D. I. of Schools ...	...	1	1	1	1	1
District Superintendent of Education.	...	..	...	...	...	1
Deputy Superintendent of Education.	...	..	...	...	...	2

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Deputy Inspector of Schools.	1	3	3	3	4	4
Deputy Superintendent of Basic Education.	...	...	...	...	...	1
Deputy Superintendent of Health and Physical Education.	...	...	...	...	...	1
Sub-Inspector of Schools	7	7	13	17	19	39
Inspecting Moulvies ...	...	...	2	2	2	2
Assistant S. I. S. ...	2	2	...	...	...	...
Deputy Superintendent of C. D. Blocks.	...	...	...	...	...	4

INCIDENCE OF LITERACY AND EDUCATION.

The old *Purnea Gazetteer* (1911) mentions that in 1901 only 1,827 persons in the district were able to read and write in English, while the total number of persons returned as literate, i.e., able to read and write in any language, was 55,591 representing not more than 3 per cent (5.7 for males and 0.1 for females) of the population. Bad communications, economic distress and low incidence of health were some of the causes for the low percentage of literacy.

In 1908 there were 919 educational institutions with 19,884 pupils on the rolls, viz., 766 public institutions with an attendance of 18,445 pupils and 153 private institutions with an attendance of 1,439.

According to the census figures, the percentage of literacy among males was 2.05 in 1911, 2.11 among males and among females 0.1 in 1912, 3.29 among males and 0.38 among females in 1921-22, 4.5 in males and 0.73 in females in 1931-32, 4.92 in males and 1.18 in females in 1941-42, 4.67 in males in 1946-47, 4.95 in males and 0.1 in females in 1947-48, 4.91 in males and 1.04 in females in 1948, 6.4 in males and 1.23 in females in 1949-50.

The percentage of literate among males was 7.16 and among females 1.32 in 1950-51. The incidence of literacy among both males and females is definitely very poor.

EDUCATIONAL STANDARD.

The present standard of education for the people cannot be said to be satisfactory. According to the census of 1951 there are 2,08,017 persons who can only read and write but have not passed the Middle examination but are classified as literate population. The table below from the *District Census Hand Book*, 1951 will show the educational standard of the people of the district:—

Educational standard.	Persons.	Males.	Females.
Literate	2,08,017	1,85,835	22 182
Middle School	21,951	19,354	2.597
Matriculates	7,218	7,038	180
I. A. or I. Sc	2,390	2,364	26
B. A. or B. Sc.	672	666	6
Post-Graduate	72	72	..
Teaching ..	1,4 55	1,446	9
Engineering	20	20	..
Commerce	27	27	..
Agriculture	14	14	..
Veterinary	38	38	..
Legal	2 03	203	..
Medical	948	941	7
Others	509	487	22
Total ..	2,43,534	2,18,505	25,029

The statistics will indicate that higher studies are confined to a very few persons. The category "Others" will include those who have passed Hindi examinations, such as *Prathama, Madhyama, Sahityaratna, Visharad*, etc. The statistics also show very poor progress of female education.

Since 1951 there has been an expansion of schools and colleges for general and technical education. Presumably in the last decade there has been some progress but the basic cause of economic distress still stands as a block.

SPREAD OF EDUCATION AMONG WOMEN AND BACKWARD CLASSES.

According to the old Gazetteer (1911) there were 27 Lower Primary schools for girls with 499 pupils on the rolls. There were also 174 girls reading in boys' schools, so that the total number of girls under instruction was 1,673.

There has been a gradual rise in the number of girls' schools and scholars. In 1950-51 there were 136 Primary schools with 12,830 pupils, four Middle schools with 2,098 students and four High schools with 349 students. There is no separate girls' college in the district. There are, however, some girls reading in the colleges at Purnea, Katihar, Banmankhi, Kishanganj and Forbesganj. The total number of girls studying in the colleges will be less than 100.

The total population of Aboriginals, Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes and Tribes in Purnea district according to 1951 census is considerable and has been mentioned elsewhere. This large population is economically rather poor and is scattered all over the district. It is only since 1941 that special efforts are being made to spread education among them.

The spread of education among the Scheduled and Aboriginal Classes will be indicated in the following table:—

Number of schools for scheduled castes.

Year.	Schools.		Scholars.	
	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.
1941-42	47	9	1,456	163
1946-47	33	1	960	120
1947-48	25	2	779	133
1948-49	25	2	691	119
1949-50	24	2	718	105
1950-51	32	4	1,037	313

This chart supplied by the Collector's office discloses a rather disquieting picture. It will show that in 1941-42 there were more boys studying than in 1950-51 although the number of girls has considerably gone up. The number of schools has also not

gone up substantially. The chart does not mention the standard of the schools and presumably they are primary or of lower middle standard. It is true that there are such boys in the other ordinary schools throughout the district but their number is very small.

There were no Scheduled Caste Hindu boys in the high stage up to 1931-32. There were 125 boys in 1941-42, 326 boys in 1946-47, 547 boys and 1 girl in 1947-48, 618 boys and 1 girl in 1948-49, 1,976 Scheduled and Backward Community boys and 5 girls in 1949-50 and 2,138 boys and 8 girls in 1950-51.

There were no Scheduled Caste Hindu boys in Middle stage in 1911 and 1912. There were 15 boys in 1921-22, 76 boys in 1932-33, 257 boys and 12 girls in 1941-42, 430 boys and 1 girl in 1946-47, 595 boys and 27 girls in 1947-48, 3,401 boys and 391 girls in 1948-49, 4,432 Scheduled and Backward Community boys and 1,580 girls in 1949-50 and 8,656 boys and 1,637 girls in 1950-51.

There were 378 Scheduled Caste Hindu boys and 32 girls in Primary stage in 1911, 432 boys and 43 girls in 1912, 648 boys and 205 girls in 1921-22, 1,319 boys and 473 girls in 1931-32, 1,296 boys and 712 girls in 1941-42, 1,048 boys and 674 girls in 1946-47, 1,095 boys and 698 girls in 1947-48, 1,273 boys and 968 girls in 1948-49, 3,954 Scheduled and Backward Community boys and 984 girls in 1949-50 and 10,350 boys and 3,352 girls in 1950-51.

There was no Scheduled Caste Hindu boy in any special school till 1931-32. There was only 1 boy in 1941-42, no boy in 1946-47, 3 boys in 1947-48, 2 boys and 1 girl in 1948-49, 8 boys in 1949-50 and 3,698 boys and 7 girls in 1950-51.

The following table supplied by the Collector's office indicates the spread of education among the aboriginals (Santhals, Oraons, Dhangars, etc.) :—

Year.	Number of schools.		Scholars.	
	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.
1941-42	13	1	334	64
1946-47	16	1	488	22
1947-48	19	1	701	45
1948-49	19	1	688	40
1949-50	18	1	636	77
1950-51	16	1	640	55

This chart also shows that the progress is very small. The decline in the number of schools for boys in 1950-51 reducing the number to that of 1946-47 is not known. There has been only one special school for aboriginal girls since 1941-42. There has been an increase in the number of boys but the number of girls in 1950-51 is smaller than the number in 1941-42. The number of aboriginal boys in the ordinary Middle or High schools is also rather small.

BASIC EDUCATION.

Considering the desire for a better and more practical type of education right through the Primary and Secondary stages the Government have opened a few Basic schools in this district. Spinning has continued to be one of the most popular crafts followed in all the Basic institutions and a number of schools are provided with looms in order to teach the students in the craft of weaving. Want of adequate equipments was a great handicap in the way of successful implementation of the economic aspect of Basic Education. But some efforts were made to meet a part of the cost of education of the scholars by their own earnings In order to maintain the high efficiency, Basic schools were organised on model lines under the supervision of the Inspecting Officers The Basic institutions are controlled by the District Inspector of Schools whereas the Deputy Superintendent of Basic Education supervises the Basic institutions and is the technical adviser to the District Inspector of Schools in matters relating to those institutions.

The following table will show the number of Basic institutions and scholars on roll in the district:—

Kind of institutions.	Years				Remarks.
	1950		1957		
	Schools.	Scholars.	Schools.	Scholars.	
Senior Basic * schools	..	...	21	2,527	Junior Basic schools upgraded into Senior ones and hence there is a decrease in 1957.
Junior Basic schools	22	1,857	1	40	
Post-Basic schools ...	2	68	2	210	
Basic Training schools	1	35	1	141	
Junior Training schools	2	81	2	185	

The above table shows the increase in the number of scholars in the Basic institutions though the number of schools has remained the same.

POST-BASIC EDUCATION.

The draft syllabus and courses of studies for Post-Basic education at the Basic type High school are based on the experiments carried out for full four years in one school and for one to two years in twelve schools in the State of Bihar. Those who study the syllabus have to keep before them the object which the system of education to which the syllabus applies has in view.

High school education as a development of Basic education envisages diversified type of course to suit varied aptitudes and attainments of pupils to meet the varied requirements of society. The object is, on the one hand, to prepare the most intelligent for higher university and technological education and the majority for direct entry into remunerative employment and professions. In order to attain this objective it is not only necessary, but imperative, that during the period of training, students and teachers should co-operatively make the schools self-sufficient, provided of course the State and the society secure land, buildings, equipments, etc. The pupils are also to make themselves self-sufficient in the matter of their food supply and clothing. The objective aimed at has been experimented upon in the existing two Post-Basic schools of Purnea district at Srinagar and Korha. The impact has not yet been assessed.

Subjects taught in the two Post-Basic schools of the district are—

(1) The Mother tongue, (2) Mathematics, (3) General Science (Physics, Chemistry, Biology), (4) History, (5) Geography, (6) Economics, (7) Mensuration, (8) Civics, (9) Domestic Science, (10) Physical education, (11) Music.

While undergoing instructions in the special class each pupil will be required to pay a monthly fee of Rs. 5. In a Post-Basic school, school fees are paid by the pupils from their own earnings through the opportunities provided for the teaching of the different professions.

EDUCATION AMONG DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES.

Among Muslims.

During 1911-12, there were eight *madrasas* with 282 scholars. There were 232 Primary schools for boys and 72 for girls with

5,345 boys and 1,502 girls in them and the total expenditure over them was Rs. 54,878.

During 1921-22 there were eight *madrasas* with 291 scholars in them. There were 240 Primary schools for boys and 76 for girls with 5,529 boys.

During 1931-32, there were nine *madrasas* with 311 boys and 3 girls in them. There were 392 Primary schools for boys and 87 for girls with 10,574 boys and 3,037 girls in them and the expenditure over them was 82,334.

During 1941-42, there were 14 *madrasas*, with 813 boys and 51 girls in them. There were 320 Primary schools for boys and 132 for girls with 11,140 boys and 4,953 girls.

During 1946-47, there were seven *madrasas* with 259 boys. There were 278 Primary schools for boys and 90 for girls with 10,047 boys and 3,755 girls.

During 1947-48, there were six *madrasas* with 262 boys. There were 281 Primary schools for boys and 82 for girls with 10,304 boys and 3,605 girls.

During 1948-49, there were six *madrasas* with 268 boys. There were 289 Primary schools for boys and 78 for girls with 10,594 boys and 2,833 girls.

During 1949-50, there were nine *madrasas* with 446 boys and 4 girls There were 280 Primary schools for boys and 70 for girls with 11,494 boys and 3,584 girls.

During 1950-51, there were eight *madrasas* with 479 boys and 35 girls. There were 293 Primary schools for boys and 73 for girls with 13,661 boys and 4,259 girls.

There were 265 Muhammadan boys in High stage in 1911, 270 boys in 1912, 298 boys in 1921-22, 492 boys in 1931-32, 890 boys in 1941-42, 1,282 boys and 2 girls in 1946-47, 1,308 boys and 2 girls in 1947-48, 1,397 boys and 2 girls in 1948-49, 1,499 boys and 2 girls in 1949 50 and 1,285 boys and 2 girls in 1950-51.

There were 274 Muhammadan boys in Middle stage in 1911, 284 boys in 1912, 596 boys in 1921-22, 1,378 boys and 13 girls in 1931-32, 4,165 boys and 178 girls in 1941-42, 4,412 boys and 196 girls in 1946-47, 4,715 boys and 218 girls in 1947-48, 3,439 boys and 222 girls in 1948-49, 4,872 boys and 223 girls in 1949-50 and 4,883 boys and 228 girls in 1950-51.

There were 7,645 Muhammadan boys and 229 girls in Primary stage in 1911, 7,878 boys and 238 girls in 1912, 11,585 boys and 697 girls in 1921-22, 14,669 boys and 1,336 girls in

1931-32, 14,128 boys and 1,857 girls in 1941-42, 13,237 boys and 1,469 girls in 1946-47, 13,868 boys and 1,493 girls in 1947-48, 14,066 boys and 1,539 girls in 1948-49, 15,679 boys and 1,682 girls in 1949-50 and 16,973 boys and 2,366 girls in 1950-51.

There were 129 Muhammadan boys in all the stages in special schools in 1911, 144 boys in 1912, 155 boys in 1921-22, 161 boys in 1931-32, 246 boys in 1941-42, 283 boys in 1946-47, 277 boys in 1947-48, 286 boys in 1948-49, 301 boys and 1 girl in 1949-50 and 2,128 boys and 2 girls in 1950-51.

Thus there was a rise of 1,020 boys and 2 girls in High stage, 4,609 boys and 228 girls in Middle stage, 9,328 boys and 2,137 girls in Primary stage and 1,999 boys and 2 girls in all the stages in special schools during the period under report

Among Sikhs and Aboriginals.

There were no Sikh and aboriginal children up to 1921-22 in the High stage There was only 1 aboriginal boy in 1931-32, 5 Sikh boys and 3 aboriginal boys in 1941 42, 2 Sikh and 3 aboriginal boys in 1946-47, 4 Sikh and 11 aboriginal boys in 1947-48, 5 Sikh and 12 aboriginal boys in 1948-49, 6 Sikh and 23 aboriginal boys in 1949-50 and 8 Sikh and 48 aboriginal boys in 1950 51 There was no girl of these castes in this stage

There were no Sikh and aboriginal children up to 1921 22 in Middle stage. There were 2 Sikh boys in 1931-32, 5 boys and 2 girls of Sikh and 21 aboriginal boys in 1941-42, 11 boys and 4 girls of Sikh and 30 boys and 1 girl of aboriginal in 1946 47, 12 boys and 2 girls of the Sikh and 32 aboriginal boys in 1947-48, 13 boys and 2 girls of the Sikh and 28 aboriginal boys in 1948-49, 30 boys and 7 girls of the Sikh and 148 boys and 5 girls of the aboriginal in 1949-50 and 38 boys and 15 girls of the Sikh and 269 boys and 8 girls of the aboriginal in 1950 51

There were 74 boys and 19 girls and 688 boys and 43 girls of the Sikh and the aboriginal in Primary stage respectively in 1931-32. 69 boys and 44 girls and 857 boys and 40 girls in 1941-42, 68 boys and 40 girls and 838 boys and 42 girls in 1946-47, 59 boys and 32 girls and 952 boys and 49 girls in 1947-48, 70 boys and 49 girls and 866 boys and 18 girls in 1948-49, 78 boys and 52 girls and 892 boys and 26 girls in 1949-50 and 85 boys and 59 girls and 932 boys and 37 girls in 1950-51.

There was only 1 Sikh boy in 1946-47, 2 aboriginal boys in 1949-50 and 5 aboriginal boys in 1950-51 in special schools.

There was an increase of 8 Sikh and 48 aboriginal boys in the High stage, 38 boys and 15 Sikh girls, 269 boys and 8 aboriginal girls in the Middle stage, 85 boys and 59 Sikh girls, 932 boys

and 37 aboriginal girls in the Primary stage and 1 Sikh boy and 5 aboriginal boys in all the stages of the special school, during the period under report.

Among Christians.

The spread of education among the Christians has also been rather poor.

During 1911 and 1912 there were no Christian boys in High school stage. During 1921-22, there were 3 Christian boys in this stage, 3 in 1931-32, 1 in 1941-42, 4 in 1946-47, 3 in 1947-48, 2 in 1948-49, 4 in 1949-50 and 3 in 1950-51.

There were no Christian boys in Middle stage in 1911 and 1912. There was only 1 Christian boy in the stage in 1921-22, no boy in 1931-32, 2 boys in 1941-42, 4 boys in 1946-47, 5 boys in 1947-48, 5 boys in 1948-49, 6 boys in 1949-50 and 6 boys in 1950-51.

There were no Christian boys in Primary stage during 1911, 1912 and 1921-22. There were 65 boys and 71 girls in this stage in 1931-32, 59 boys and 47 girls in 1941-42, 75 boys and 55 girls in 1946-47, 72 boys and 15 girls in 1947-48, 62 boys and 1 girl in 1948-49, 52 boys and 2 girls in 1949-50 and 57 boys and 4 girls in 1950-51.

There were no Christian boys in any special and professional school during the period under report. There was no rise rather a slight fall in the number of Christian children during the period.

HOSTELS AND RESIDENCES FOR STUDENTS.

Year.		Number of boardings.		Number of boarders.
1911	...	21	...	310
1912	...	23	...	317
1921-22	..	28	...	435
1931-32	...	27	...	552
1941-42	...	60	...	1,485
1946-47	...	58	...	1,620
1947-48	...	54	...	1,489
1948-49	...	65	...	1,631
1949-50	...	64	...	1,734
1950-51	...	71	...	1,885

Due to the increase in the number of High schools the number of hostels has been increasing. The provision is still rather inadequate.

COLLEGES.

Purnea College.

Purnea College was established in 1948. The public of the district with the help of the officials raised more than 2 lakhs of rupees. The college is located in the south-west direction from the Purnea-court station. The main college building was purchased with a compound of about 125 bighas of land. New buildings were constructed.

The second building that was purchased is situated at a distance of about a quarter mile from the college. This building has a compound of about 200 bighas. This building accommodates the hostel for the college boys.

There are more than 500 students on the roll of the college teaching up to B. A. standard The college has got a library which needs expansion. There are a number of girl students in the college.

Katihar College.

Katihar College was established in 1953. It got affiliation up to I A. and I Com. standard in 1954 after depositing a sum of Rs. 75,000 with the Bihar University. The principal donor of the money was Shri Darshan Sah, Barabazar, Katihar. In 1954, it was named Darshan Sah College after the name of the generous donor. The college building is situated in a spacious area of 16 acres of land. The college has been raised to Degree standard in Arts in 1956.

There is a hostel for 100 students. There are about 500 students in the college including a number of girl students.

Banmankhi College.

Gorelal Mahta College, Banmankhi, was started in 1955. It is now a Degree college. The principal donors are Shri Gorelal Mehta and Shri Anup Lal Mehta. There are now about 200 students in the college. The college is located in the interior of the district and serves the needs of the rural and particularly poorer boys.

Two other colleges have been started in 1959-60 at Forbesganj and Kishanganj. Although the number of students

in these two colleges is not large, it is expected that the colleges will be put on sound footing very soon. Both these colleges are sponsored by a few enthusiastic non-officials of the towns.

SPORTS AND AMUSEMENTS.

Purnea is one of the best districts in Bihar which has produced a galaxy of sportsmen and athletes. In the good old days of the European planters and the *zamindars, shikar* as a sport was well patronised. In some of the *shikar* books published in the 19th century, Purnea district had been described as one of the best *shikar* areas in India. This is no wonder as Purnea was full of thick jungles then. In 1836 the Commissioner of Revenue had given direction to the Collector of Purnea in a letter dated the 27th May to conclude some arrangements in order to utilise the jungle lands and make them productive. This policy of deforestation had completely denuded Purnea of her jungles and now an Afforestation Division has been started with Purnea as headquarters to give some forests to the district.

A rhinoceros had been killed at Korha within a few miles from Purnea town by Mr. Shillingford in the seventies of the last century. This rhinoceros had been kept stuffed in the museum in Calcutta and was one of the biggest specimen of the kind. This exhibit has, however, integrated now through sheer age. Purnea jungle was full of wild buffaloes, tigers and various kinds of deer and other species of wild life. The old issues of *Sports Magazines, Planters' Gazettes* and the two books on *shikar* by Raja Kirtyanand Singh of Banaili are eloquent of the *shikar* facilities that Purnea had at one time. Besides wild animals, the rivers and the shallow water pools were full of hundreds of crocodiles and birds, both migratory and static. With the denudation of jungles, the *shikar* days in Purnea are now practically over.

Pig sticking was a common sport * Polo was actively played in Purnea even three decades back. The Polo team of Raja P. C. Lal of Nazarganj (Purnea) had won various cups and other trophies in Calcutta and other places. Racing was also a popular form of sports in Purnea. Bhutia pony race was a regular feature in Purnea at one time and is still held at Gulabbagh *mela* every year. When the Lady Houston Expedition visited Purnea in 1933 and made Lalbalu near Purnea their headquarters for the first air reconnoitre over Nepal, there was a revival of Bhutia pony race for the entertainment of the members of the Houston Expedition. Incidentally it may be mentioned that

*An interesting letter had appeared in *Bengal Sporting Magazine*, V. 7, 1836, pp. 73—76, from "a superannuated hog hunter" of Purneah (P. C. R. C.).

Lady Houston sponsored this expedition which was led by Lord Clydesdale and after several attempts, their planes flew over the unchartered sky of Nepal and took aerial photographs. Nepal had given permission for flying over Nepal but not to land and as a matter of fact at that time there was no aerial strip anywhere in Nepal for a plane to land. The Houston Expedition party's stay for about a month in Purnea in 1933 was marked with great sporting activities which drew big crowds. Peculiarly enough it was again Mr. H. M. Weatherall of Purnea who along with Squadron Leader Majithia flew over Nepal in a Bonanza and landed at Kathmandu for the first time in 1947. This flight was, however, done from Muzaffarpur.

Purnea has produced a number of *shikaris* and mention may be made of Raja Kirtyanand Singh of Banaili and Raja P. C. Lal of Nazarganj. The Shillingfords of Purnea and the Smiths of Kolassy near Katihar had a large number of wonderful *shikar* trophies collected in Purnea. Tom Smith, the last remnant of Kolassy family was not only a great horseman but a great *shikari*.

Purnea has produced several first grade foot-ballers of all-India fame. Two of them Samad and Hira Sengupta of Mohanbagan and Patna teams were known as the wizards of the football field in their time The Banaili Raj and Nazarganj Raj and other *zamindar* families used to take keen interest in football and ran their own teams and encouraged this kind of sport by lavishly spending money. It is unfortunate that this source has dried up and the standard of football in Purnea has also gone down.

There is a District Sports Association which is now the centre of the sporting activities of the district. Purnea Station Club is the premier club in the district and has always encouraged sporting activities and particularly tennis and billiards. Purnea Station Club has indirectly sponsored similar clubs in Kishanganj, Katihar and Araria. Katihar also played a very important part for tennis and football. The railways have given great encouragement to the development of various kinds of sports.

The Mahila Samiti in Purnea is an organisation of ladies which has taken up a number of humanitarian social schemes. There are several dramatic clubs in Purnea, Katihar, Araria and Kishanganj and they occasionally stage dramas. Ralaram Railway Recreation Institute at Katihar has encouraged dramas and shows among the railway population. Katihar and Kishanganj have also a number of smaller social institutions and clubs that encourage community life. The *Akhras* and *Durgabaris* have played a great part in this.

Cinemas have become extremely popular throughout the district. There are several permanent cinema houses in Purnea, Katihar and Kishanganj. Temporary cinema shows run for months together in various mofussil towns and particularly in the *melas*. As a matter of fact cinema hits are heard repeated even in villages.

As mentioned elsewhere, Purnea is a district of *melas*. From the month of October to June, there are *melas* at some place or the other. Various types of entertainments are organised by the sponsors of the *melas* to attract people. Circus, theatres, cinemas, *nautankis* and dancing girls have been the main sources of entertainment of these *melas*. There has recently been a move to discourage dancing girls visiting the *melas*. Most important of these *melas* are Khagra *mela* at Kishanganj, Gulabbagh *mela* in Purnea, Forbesganj *mela* at Forbesganj. Thousands of people mainly from the villages visit these *melas* every day. Educative exhibitions are held to spread more information on agriculture, industries, animal husbandry, sanitation, etc. Cattle shows are a common feature of these *melas* and prizes are liberally given to the best competitors in the exhibitions and the cattle shows.

The various Hindu *pujas* and the Muslim festivals afford great facilities for amusements and entertainments. In the past a number of rich *zamindars* used to invite famous musicians, poets, wrestlers and magicians for the entertainment of their *ryots* during such occasions. Durga Puja, Kali Puja, Saraswati Puja and Jhulan were observed with pomp by such *zamindar* families. Wrestling competitions were run and used to attract thousands of people. Purnea district has also produced some good wrestlers.

As mentioned elsewhere Purnea district has a large aboriginal population. They have still maintained their primitive dances which show a wonderful appreciation of music, rhythm and poise. Their folk dances on ceremonial occasions participated in both by boys and girls are very entertaining. It may be mentioned that a Purnea party of folk dancers had taken part for several years and was given rewards at New Delhi for their display on the Republic Day (26th January).

INSTITUTIONS.

The Purnea Athletic Club.

It was started in the year 1947 under the inspiration and guidance of Sri Phanindra Nath Chatterjee with the help of a few enthusiastic young men. It was housed in the residential quarters of a noble-minded citizen of this town, having a spacious enclosed lawn in front of it.

This useful institution is popular and has a membership of about 200 boys and girls at present.

Indu Bhusan Public Library, Purnea.

The first public library of Purnea town was established in the year 1936 under the style of "The Public Library". It was purely a non-official effort and started with door to door collection of books contributed voluntarily by the citizens of the town and gradually it grew up a popular public institution with the patronage and co-operation of the reading public

In the year 1942 the library received the gift of a spacious building erected by the sons of Sri Indu Bhusan Bhadury, an eminent lawyer of Purnea and as a mark of honour the name of the institution was thereafter changed to its present style of "The Indu Bhusan Library". The library has now a rich collection of books containing to the tastes and needs of Bengali, Hindi and English reading public, besides a number of newspapers, periodicals and books of information for the free reading room.

Sri Sri Ram Krishna Daridra Bhandar, Purnea

This institution was started in Purnea on the model of Ram Krishna Mission doing humanitarian work all over the country A number of public spirited non officials took the lead to sponsor this institution.

It has got a temple of Sree Sree Ram Krishna Paramhansadeva, a library building and a dispensary building besides other small houses.

The main activities of the institution is to render help to suffering humanity as far as possible, irrespective of caste and creed.

It has got a library and a reading room A juvenile section of the library is attached to the main library Homeopathic medicines are distributed free to the patients and weekly doses are given to some destitute poor families and sick diet and other occasional help is given to deserving poor patients.

Pujas, Kirtans, Bhajan and religious discussions are daily held

Purnea Zilla Hindi Sahitya Sammelan.

Hindi Sahitya Sammelan is one of the well organised institutions of the district. It was started in the year 1926 at Bareta. It has helped and encouraged in starting Hindi examination centres, opening libraries and reading rooms in the district.

With the help of the Government, it has started and maintained for some time a number of Hindi schools.

Purnea Zilla Pustakalaya Sangh.

An attempt was made in 1926 at Bareta to start this organisation and a meeting was held but it was unsuccessful. After a lapse of 13 years it was again started in 1949. It has now a branch of the Central Libraries Association. Its first annual session was held in 1951 at Mogalir Purandah, P.-S. Dhamdaha under the presidency of Kumar Ganganand Singh and the second session was held in 1952 at Jagannathpur under the presidency of Sri Baidyanath Prasad Choudhury At present 144 libraries of the district are affiliated to it. It has become a well organised institution within a very short time.

Bharat Sevak Samaj, Katihar.

A branch of Bharat Sevak Samaj, an all-India organisation was established at Katihar in 1954. The branch has 24 centres in the district. The organisation renders voluntary social services and helps in development schemes. The organisation also fights against corruption in offices and elsewhere. A number of night schools, welfare centres for women and children are run by the local branch.

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Hindi in some form or other is the main language of the people of the district although Bengali, Maithili and Udru are also in use throughout the district by Bengalis, Maithili Brahmins and Muslims. In Kishanganj subdivision the rural people of all communities speak a peculiar language known as Kishunganjia which is really Hindi mixed with various local dialects

Literature.

Although Purnea is educationally backward its contribution to Hindi literature is of some importance. It has in the past as well as present, several eminent writers of Hindi literature mention among whom may be made of Kumar Ganganand Singh, Sri Dwijdeni, Sri Lakshmi Narayan Sudhansu, Fanishwar Nath "Renu" and Anup Lall Mandel. Sri Lakshmi Narain Sudhansu is also a literary critic and edited a Hindi monthly *Avantika* for some years.

Purnea district has produced a number of eminent Bengali writers. Sri Kedar Nath Bandopadhaya was a very humorous Bengali writer who has written a number of books. He was nicknamed "Dada mashay" (grandfather) because of the ripe old

age at which he passed away. Sri Satinath Bhaduri of Bhatta Bazar is not a prolific writer but has written some thoughtful books which were very well received. Dr Balaichand Mukherji "Banful" of Purnea has a vigorous style and has written a large number of Bengali novels and story books Raja Kirtyanand Singh of Banaili has written two books in English on *Shikar* in Purnea. It may be mentioned here that the Sripur family of Kumar Ganganand Singh and the Banaili family have always given patronage to literature and art At one time they used to support literary men.

It may be mentioned here that Purnea was once a great centre of Maithil culture and its influence is still quite marked There is a great affinity between Maithil and Bengali cultures and that is why although a very poor district Purnea's contribution is considerable

It has to be recalled that the ancient Tira-bhukti had more extensive boundaries than modern Tirhut, a name which is used as its equivalent.* According to "Mithila Khanda" this comprises the modern districts of Muzaffarpur Darbhanga, Champaran and parts of the district of Monghyr Bhagalpur (Saharsa now) and Purnea Some of the Sanskrit Writers of Mithila were men of Purnea district Pandit Badri Natha Upadhyaya was said to have emigrated from his birth place in village Khokha in Purnea district to village Ujjain in Darbhanga where he lived under the patronage of late Maharaja Maheshwara Singh. He has been placed by Shri Shyam Narayan Singh in the later half of the 19th century He was the author of (1) the commentary known as *Marmasucika Byakhya* on the Tantrika work *Bhairava Yama-loktasotra;* (2) a commentary on *Tara-bhakti Sudharnava;* (3) *Cakra Kaumudi.* Another scholar Pandit Parasurama Jha was a good Nayyayika and Dharmasastrika Pandita. It is traditionally said that he lived in village Jagili (in Purnea district) where he had written many valuable Sanskrit Books on palm leaves which are even now in the library of the Maharaja Bahadur of Darbhanga. His work *Satasastra samvada* is a useful composition. As a student of Raghudeva Misra, he has been placed by S. N Singh to the 2nd half of the 17th century.

The Maithili writers have also drawn their inspiration extensively from Purnea district Maithili is the dialect, as mentioned before, spoken in North Bihar in the districts of Muzaffarpur, Champaran Darbhanga, North Monghyr and North

History of Tirhut by Shyam Narayan Singh, 1922, p. 2.

Bhagalpur (now Saharsa) and Purnea. The ancient Maithili dialect as used by Vidyapati and Jyotoriswara have had much in common with the ancient Bengali—though differences are evident in spelling, formation of verbs and pronunciation. There is a strange familiarity between the composition of Vidyapati in Maithili and Chandidasa in Bengali The Vaishnava influence on the district of Purnea is quite apparent and *Kirtans* have even now a strange fascination throughout the district. Students from Bengal used to flock to different parts of Mithila to learn at the feet of Maithili scholars. No doubt there has been a great interchange of culture-complex between Bengal and Mithila which also included this district. It may be mentioned that Darbhanga Raj having great landed interest in Purnea district since *pargana* Dharampur was granted to Mahesh Thakur along with the whole of *Sarkar* Tirhut has been the connecting link of cultural affinity of Purnea with the rest of Tirhut.

CHAPTER XV.

MEDICAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES.

SURVEY OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND MEDICAL FACILITIES IN EARLY TIMES.

The following two paragraphs are quoted from the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* by L. S. S. O'Malley (1911):—

"Among the Indian community the district has an evil reputation for unhealthiness, which is expressed in a common proverb—"Na zahar khao, na mahur khao. Marna hai, to Purania jao, i.e., Don't take poison. You have to die, so go to Purnea." This evil repute is no new thing, for in the *Riyazu-s-Salatin* (1788) we find the climate described as insalubrious and uncongenial. To this day it is so much dreaded, that people of other districts, especially Bengalis, are afraid to come and settle in the district. "Ask," says a Bengali writer, "any one leaving the railway train at Sahebgunge what place he is coming to, and it is ten to one he will say that he is going to Purneah. Ask again something of the place, and he is sure to change colour and turn pale. This is no doubt ominous to you, if you are for Purneah too. You feel you are going to a penal settlement, where life is death and death a positive relief." This belief in the unhealthiness of the district is borne out by the statistics of births and deaths collected since 1892, when the present system of mortuary returns was introduced. In the 16 years ending 1907 the reported deaths outnumbered the births by 39,000; in only seven years was the birth rate greater than the death rate; and in the three years 1905—07 Purnea had the unenviable pre-eminence of having the highest death rate and the greatest excess of deaths over births in the whole of Bengal.

"The insalubrity of the district is chiefly due to its physical configuration, for it is a low-lying tract interspersed with shallow swamps, stagnant rivers, and wide stretches of flooded land, which slowly dry up after the rains and form breeding grounds for the

anopheles mosquito. The west of the district is, however, far more healthy than the east. The eastern half is a depressed, highly cultivated, alluvial tract, watered by a network of inosculating rivers and containing numerous small marshes. Here the water-supply is derived chiefly from the rivers. The western part of the district is higher in level, and is thickly overlaid with sand deposited by the Kosi river in its gradual westward movement. The greater part is open pasture land so sterile as not to be worth cultivating, and crops are grown for the most part near the rivers and in irrigated plots close to the villages. There is considerable interlacing of the channels and branches of the Kosi, which are dry in the hot weather, swampy in the cold weather and full of water in the rains. The water-supply of this half of the district is chiefly from wells, except where the villages are actually on the banks of a river."*

The physical configuration that has been referred to as being chiefly responsible for the insalubrity of the district has had some change in the last three decades. The great Bihar Earthquake of 1934 had thrown out a very considerable quantity of sand and a large number of the wells in the district were actually choked up. From 1934 onwards there has been a distinct change in the general incidence of public health. It is true that the district is substantially still a low-lying tract interspersed with swamps and stagnant rivers and there are still wide stretches of breeding grounds for the mosquitoes. Nevertheless the opening up of the district by roads and railways, the persistent anti malarial and other health measures, the opening up of a large number of hospitals and dispensaries and health sub centres, denudation of the forest belts, the reclamation of many of the swampy waste lands, provision of piped water-supply in the urban areas and the provision of tube-wells and hand-pumps for some of the rural areas have definitely contributed to better the conditions of health incidence. The Multi purpose Kosi Dam Project has already been taken up, jungles have been cleared and provision of channels to drain off Kosi water for utilising the water potential for irrigation purposes has been made The Kosi Project will definitely affect the interlacing of the branches and channels of Kosi referred to by O'Malley Some of the unhealthy portions of the Purnea district particularly Chopra and Islampur *thanas*

*Page 72, *Bengal District Gazetteers, Purnea* by O'Malley, 1911.

which were notoriously known for the high incidence of malaria have now been transferred to W. Bengal.

It is rather peculiar that Hamilton's *East India Gazetteer* (1815) does not mention Purnea district as an unhealthy area. On the other hand, it mentions that it is a fertile, compact, well-watered flat and contributed about 5,000 bullocks which were well-proportioned, large in size, capable of great exertion and very superior to the draught cattle in Calcutta. Hamilton particularly referred to the export of a considerable quantity of *ghee* and Purnea's excellent breed of draught and carriage bullocks which obviously suggest a very good pasturage.

A brief survey of public health and medical facilities in early times has been covered in O'Malley's *Purnea Gazetteer* principally based on Hunter's *Statistical Accounts*.

Fevers.

O'Malley mentions "the greatest mortality is caused by fevers, as may be gathered from the fact that in the seven years 1901—07 the annual death-rate from fevers alone averaged 32.5 per mille out of a total average mortality of 37.9 per mille. Even after making allowance for the fact that the village *chaukidar* returns under this generic head a number of deaths caused by other illnesses in which a rise of temperature occurs, there can be no doubt that in this district the majority of the deaths are rightly attributed to fever . The prevalence of fever, and especially malarial fever, is, moreover, not of recent date Thirty years ago, for instance, it was stated in the *Statistical Account of Bengal*: "Chief among the endemic diseases of Purnea are fevers, intermittent, and remittent, with their train of sequelae, spleen disease, hepatitis, diarrhoea, dysentery, dropsy and canorum oris. Persons of all ages and both sexes suffer very much from fever, which, in almost every case, is of malarial origin. Children, from the very earliest period of infancy, and, indeed, at the best, are subject to remittent fever; and in such instances rarely live to the time of the second dentition, and often die long before, from sloughing of the cheeks and gums. The few who survive and struggle on to the age of puberty have sometimes been known to entirely recover their health, the development of the natural powers about that period producing, especially in the case of females, a most remarkable effect."* The causes of fever are not a matter of doubt in Purnea. Nearly everywhere may be found swamps and dead or dying rivers; large tracts are practically old river beds, and a great part of the country is under water in the

*Bengal District Gazetteers, Purnea by O'Malley, 1911, p. 78.

rains. After their close fever is very rife among the native population, but Europeans enjoy comparative immunity or suffer for a shorter time.†

"The types of fever most commonly met with in Purnea town are intermittent, remittent, tertian, continued and cachectic. The intermittent type, which is most common, consists of a quotidian fever lasting 4 or 5 days, with complete intermission. It commences with rigors, the temperature rising to 103° or 104°, and eventually falling after profuse sweating—in fact, the true ague attack. In the remittent form there are generally no rigors but a slight cold stage, the temperature immediately rising to 103° or 104°. It generally lasts from 4 or 5 days to a week, temperature seldom coming down to normal during this period. In these cases the culminating type may occur, in which temperature suddenly rises to 105° or 106° and cannot be reduced, notwithstanding all treatment, the patient becoming delirious and dying within about 48 hours. The tertian type is rarer; when it occurs, there is the usual hot, cold and sweating stage. In continued fever the temperature rises to about 101 or 102° at one part of the day and comes down to 99° in the evening, and so on for 10 days or a fortnight. Sometimes, there is no second rise of temperature during the 24 hours, e g, at night. In this type there are no rigors and little or no shivering. There is also very little sweating, and symptoms are absent except for a general feeling of weakness.

Cachectic fever has been observed among the outpatients of the hospital and the poorer classes There is an irregular fever not rising very high and then only for 2 or 3 days. After remaining at normal for a longer or shorter period, there is the same short rise and fall, and this may go on for weeks The patients are generally very anaemic, the spleen and liver enlarged—the former excessively so—and there are all the concomitant signs of anaemia with oedema of the feet and puffiness of the face. Most of these cases appear to be aggravated by want of food and the majority of those who come to hospital for treatment go away again in a week's time because they have not been rapidly cured. Some of them have a peculiarly malevolent form of fever known as *Kaladukha*, whose characteristic symptom is considerable pigmentation of the skin. These cases are generally hopeless, for the patients gradually become more anaemic and die from asthenia.

†Even in 1933 when the Editor was posted at Purnea there were some Europeans and Anglo Indians who were full of vigour at the age of seventy, (P. C. R. C.).

The reports of the fevers received from the dispensaries in rural areas generally include the above forms together with quartan and double tertian. The latter are comparatively rare, and the most common is evidently the intermittent or quotidian. A fever resembling *Kala-Azar* has been reported from Thakurganj on the north-eastern border of the district close to Jalpaiguri. The Hospital Assistant's report on this type is as follows:—"Some of the cases of enlarged spleen with marked anaemia and debility, attended with intercurrent attacks of fever, prevalent in this quarter, resembled those of *Kala-Azar*. It is a slow and wasting disease, with great and progressive debility, intercurrent attacks of fever, enlarged spleen, darkening of the complexion, dropsical affection, etc. It appears that opium eaters suffer less from fever than their neighbours who do not eat opium, but the evidence on this point is not sufficient to make the inference reliable".*

"In 1908 an attempt was made to investigate the prevalence of malaria and its causation in the Kishanganj *thana*. A medical expert, with a large and qualified staff, conducted the enquiry, but it was soon found to be infructuous for the following reasons. The people did not take kindly to the investigations, and the utmost difficulty was experienced in examining children for enlargement of the spleen. Owing to the opposition of the parents, it was found impossible to obtain blood slides for the endemic index. There was no suitable hospital where a study of the prevailing forms of splenic enlargement could be made. Every assistance was given by the Subdivisional Officer and by a local practitioner with considerable influence, but the difficulties did not disappear, and so it was decided to abandon further enquiry in this *thana* and to continue the investigation in the Murshidabad district.

Cholera.

"Purnea lies within the endemic area of cholera, and has long been notorious for the prevalence of that disease. It is one of those districts in which cholera is believed to have existed prior to the historic epidemic of 1817; and in Hunter's *Statistical Account of Bengal* (1877) it is stated that since 1863 cholera had appeared almost with regularity every second year. Returns specially prepared show that for 33 years at least, viz., from 1859, the earliest year for which statistics are available, to 1891, this rule held good in the main, cholera having been much more prevalent in the odd than in the even years throughout almost all

*This account of the types of fever has been prepared from a note contributed by Captain A. L. Cook, M.B., I.M.S., formerly Civil Surgeon.

that period. Several of these epidemics, viz., those of 1869, 1873, 1875, 1882 and 1889 were attributed to the Karagola fair. This fair is one of the largest held in Bengal, being usually attended by 30,000 or more people, a number of whom are hillmen, Nepalese, Bhotias, etc, who go to and return from the fair by road, traversing the entire length of the district They live under insanitary conditions and fall ready victims to cholera when it breaks out among them.

"Coming to more recent times, the mortuary returns compiled since 1892 show that epidemics have been far less frequent, but they broke out in seven of the sixteen years in question, viz., in 1894, in each of the three years 1898—1900, and in each of the three years 1905–07 In the latter three years, the death-rate was 5.17, 9 37 and 8.56 per mille respectively; but none of these epidemics was comparable to that of 1,900, when over 46,000 persons died of the disease and the death-rate reached the appalling figure of 23.77 per mille. Next to this, the worst epidemic on record was that of 1891 of which the following account is given as illustrative of the etiology of the disease"*

O'Malley devotes a few paragraphs on the epidemic of cholera of 1891. He mentions that previous to 8th February, 1891, the whole of the western half of the district was free from cholera of any kind with the single exception of Araria *thana*. The epidemic broke out among the pilgrims that had gathered for the bathing festival at Manihari of the 8th February, 1891. The railways alone, O'Malley mentions carried about 60,000 to 100,000 pilgrims, thousands walked to take part in *Ardhodaya Jog* festival. From Manihari, the epidemic spread to the neighbouring *thanas* of Kadwa and Gopalpur and in the districts of Dinajpur and Rangpur O'Malley does not mention as to the approximate number of deaths.

Other Common Diseases

Some of the other common diseases mentioned by O'Malley are goitre, bowels complaints and skin diseases. Regarding Goitre, O'Malley mentioned:—

> "Goitre is very common in some parts of the district, and presents itself under the most dissimilar conditions. The two areas in which it is most met with lie one due west of Purnea along the bank of the Kosi, and the other to the south-west in the direction of Kadwa and Manihari. Most of the former tract

*Bengal District Gazetteers, Purnea by O'Malley, 1911, pp. 73—76.

is an open high country with very few marshes or stagnant pools and a soil essentially sandy. The latter is a low, damp. inundated country, with an excess of vegetation and swamp, and a soil of the heaviest clay. The points in which they coincide are that they are about equally well cultivated and have a population of Hindus and Musalmans mixed in about the same proportion, who have very similar habits of life. The drinking water in both tracts is obtained chiefly from wells, but partly also from dammed up branches of streams which have their origin in the Lower Himalayas. The nature of the strata to which the wells reach, and from which water is derived, is not certain, but there is reason to believe that calcareous beds underlie both the clay of the south-east and the sand of the west.

The enlargements of the throat are of every description, small and excessively large, soft and indurated, smooth and nodulate. They are also occasionally partial, only a single lobe of the thyroid gland being enlarged. They sometimes attain such a size as to interfere with respiration, in a few cases even to such an extent as to cause suffocation. The disease often gives rise to a strange reverberation in the throat like subdued roaring, so that the approach of a person suffering from it may be perceived at some distance. Females seem to suffer most from goitre; nor is it confined to the human subject, for it has been noticed that in the village of Barora not only are the inhabitants, all more or less affected by it, but dogs (even young puppies), horses and fowls often have thyroid swellings. The prevalence of goitre in Purnea is noticed as early as 1788 in the *Riyazu-s-Salatin,* which refers to it as follows:—'Tumours of the throat in men and women generally, as well as in wild beasts and birds, are common."*

O'Malley had also mentioned that small-pox broke out every year, but rarely in a severe epidemic form. Since 1892 the worst epidemic on record was of 1907 when it had lost 1,111 deaths. The total number of deaths in the seven years 1901—07 from plague was only 16.

**Bengal District Gazetteers, Purnea* by O'Malley, 1911, p. 79.

Regarding other infirmities, O'Malley observed that deaf-mutism was unusually prevalent and was most rife along the course of the Kamla river especially in *thanas* Purnea, Araria, Amur Kasba, where the average incidence was double than the other parts of the district. According to O'Malley a survey of Forbesganj and Katihar followed which also had a small portion of Kamla river and Gopalpur.* Gopalpur was on the left bank of the Mahananda but the other *thanas* adjoining this river had a relatively low proportion of deaf-mutes. The infirmity of deaf-mutes was associated with cretinism and goitre.

Regarding blindness, O'Malley observed that it was fairly common and was chiefly due to neglected inflammation of the eyes, poorness of constitution and the application of caustic remedies. In O'Malley's time there were scattered cases of leprosy and insanity was most common in other Bihar districts except Patna.

Regarding the medical facilities at the beginning of the present century, it would be far the best to quote a few paragraphs from O'Malley's Gazetteer—

"Vaccination is compulsory only in municipal areas, but has made satisfactory progress in rural areas. In 1908-09 the number of persons successfully vaccinated was 49,851, representing 27.03 per mille of the population; while the proportion in the case of infants was 50.16 per cent. The average annual number of successful operations in the preceding 5 years was 58,726 or 31.84 per mille of the total population.

"In 1877, there was only one charitable dispensary in the district, viz., that at Purnea. This was established in 1847, but in 1877, in spite of the lapse of 30 years, it had no better building than one composed of matting and grass. It was converted into a *pucca* building 15 years ago and has now five wards. In 1908 a separate outpatient department was added called "The Lea Dispensary" after Mr. J. H. Lea, I.C.S., a former Collector of Purnea, leaving the main building entirely for the reception of in-patients. In 1900 there were one out-door and four in-door dispensaries, and since then 11 out-door dispensaries, have been added; but the Purnea Female Hospital was amalgamated

*Gopalpur has since been transferred to West Bengal (P. C. R. C.).

with the Purnea Sadar Dispensary at the end of 1905, so that there are now 15 dispensaries, of which four receive both in-patients and out-patients, while eleven afford outdoor relief only. The former four dispensaries are: (1) at Purnea with 16 beds for male and 4 for female patients; (2) at Kishanganj with 6 beds for male and 4 for female patients; (3) at Araria (Basantpur) with 4 and 2 beds respectively; and (4) at Katihar with 3 and 2 beds respectively. The other dispensaries are situated at (1) Purnea city, (2) Manihari, (3) Mauhamdia, (4) Forbesganj, (5) Kursakanta, (6) Muhammadpur, (7) Khagra, (8) Ramganj, (9) Bahadurganj, (10) Thakurganj and (11) Champanagar. There is also an Eastern Bengal State Railway Dispensary at Katihar. The Khagra and Ramganj dispensaries are under the Khagra estate, the heirs to the Khagra estate having taken over the management in 1906, when they attained their majority and the estate was released by the Court of Wards. There was formerly a dispensary at Ramnagar, but it was closed in 1905, and a new dispensary of Champanagar was opened

"The people, strange as it may appear in so unhealthy a district, are said to be not very eager to avail themselves of medical assistance, and the dispensaries are not so largely attended as might be expected. This, however, is a feature not peculiar to Purnea, for in the Bhagalpur Division, as a whole, public medical aid appears to be more in demand, if not more appreciated, in the healthy than in the unhealthy tracts, where the people are presumably used to illness and are imbued with the apathy which constant fever produces."*

Food Habits.

A current health survey of a district cannot ignore the food habits of the people. Purnea is essentially a paddy-growing district and rice constitutes the main staple food of the people of Purnea. The upper and well-to-do classes of people have a mixed diet and may be taking food of proper calories value although they might be overemphasising on protein or starch diet. Meat, fish and eggs do not form a regular item in the daily food although one of them may be occasionally taken in the day. Purnea at

*O'Malley's *Bengal District Gazetteers*, Purnea, 1911, pp. 81-82.

one time had plenty of fish produce and a portion of it was locally consumed, but now, the bulk of fish is exported. As mentioned elsewhere, Purnea was once the land of milk and *ghee* but now the quantity of milk yield per cow is rather poor and the intake of milk and *ghee* per day for a man is not much. Chickens are largely consumed by both the Muslims and Hindus of higher income-group although many Hindus are allergic to chickens Fried rice (*chura*), curds (*dahi*), pickles (*achar*), *puris* and *bhajis* are commonly taken. *Dal* and greens are largely consumed.

The middle classes do not differ much from the upper classes so far as the diet is concerned excepting that their intake of the protein food, milk and *ghee* is smaller in quantity Fruits unfortunately do not form a regular item in the diet of either the people of higher income-group or the lower income group. The middle classes take quite a lot of the greens, either raw or cooked

The poorer sections of the people who constitute the main bulk of the population, generally eat rice, cheaper greens, called *patua* or *lafa* and occasionally *dal* with probably some small fish caught from the pools and marshes On festive occasions they would take curds (*dahi*), fried rice (*chura*), gram, *sattu* (pulvarised gram), *unkari* (gram soaked in water) Beef is taken by the poorer section of the Muslims. Surplus small fish is cured and dried in the sun and is called *sukhti*. Barsoi *hat* is a great place for the sale of *sukhti* fish. Usually the poorer classes consume *sukhti* occasionally The food consumed by the middle and poor classes of people is definitely deficient in the essential protective food elements Mal-nutrition will be quite apparent if fifty children selected at random are examined It will be found that they have not got a well-developed and well-proportioned body. Most of them will be suffering from bad teeth, defective eyes and other constitutional diseases It is due to the malnutrition of the people of Purnea and the insalubrious climate that they are rather allergic to hard manual labour It has been mentioned that if the labourers from other districts had not come to Purnea at proper time, probably the crops would not be gathered. The damp and cheerless climate definitely produces a certain amount of laziness among the people unless they take proper nutritious food. Purnea has not got good water either. Water table is quite high.

The present sources of supply of drinking water in the urban areas are: (*a*) a masonry type of wells which are rather shallow, (*b*) surface tube-wells. Filtered water-supply is being given only to some portions of Purnea and Katihar railway colony. The Purnea Sadar Hospital has arrangements for deep tube-well.

So far as the rural areas are concerned, the eastern half of the district depends entirely on the rivers although there are shallow *kacha* wells and a few surface wells here and there In western half there are shallow wells both masonry and *kacha* interspersed with a few scattered tube wells. The tanks as a rule are not used as a source of drinking water. Bad water is responsible for quite a number of diseases.

In the recent years special grants have been made available by the Government for the supply of drinking water either through its own agency or through the agency of the Local Bodies for installing surface wells and for constructing a ring of wells and renovating the existing tanks.

VITAL STATISTICS

The last census operation in 1951 established that the district has a total population of 25,31,039 with an area of 4,926 square miles As such the density of population has been calculated at 513 81 per square mile. A study of the census reports from 1872 onwards as given in the following table would show a steady increase in population which has come to 25,31,039 from 17,14,995 This increase in population is to a certain extent due to the migration of population after separation of India from Pakistan. Quite a large number of displaced persons from East Pakistan have been rehabilitated in this district The following table shows increase in population as per census reports:—

Year.	Total population of the district.
1872	17,16,547
1881	18,50,934
1891	19 47 039
1901	18,77 329
1911	19,89,637
1921	20,24,608
1931	21,86,543
1941	23,09,417
1951	25,31,039
1956 (November)	22,47,943 (after transfer of five thanas of the district to West Bengal on 1st November 1956, four thanas of Kishanganj subdivision and one of Sadar subdivision.)

The vital statistics from 1947 to 1960 are given below:—

Year.	Birth.	Rate per mille.	Death.	Rate per mille.
1947	27,953	11 04	33,180	13.01
1948	28,028	11.07	25,671	10.14
1949	27,191	10.74	18,354	7.25
1950	24,341	9.61	18,016	7.11
1951	26,228	10.36	16,743	6.61
1952	32,043	12.66	15,336	6.06
1953	33,428	13 27	13,389	5.48
1954	33,726	12.92	13,395	5.29
1955 .. —	29,394	11.61	11,346	4.48
1956	33,826	13.36	12,419	4.90
1957	21,858	9.16	10,522	4.38
1958 .. —	24,393	10.00	14,071	5.86
1959	29,563	12.31	10.595	4.41
1960	—	—	...	...

PRINCIPAL DISEASES NOW.

The old *District Gazetteer* has been quoted to show the incidence of the principal diseases. Substantially they still remain although the incidence for some of them has definitely declined.

Cholera.

In the last few decades a lot of propaganda has been done as how to avoid cholera. The earlier allergy for taking cholera inoculation is also partially liquidated. Particular steps are taken for arranging mass inoculation against cholera in *melas* and fairs and that has produced good results. These are some of the reasons why the incidence of cholera has gone down The following table will show how the incidence of cholera has gone down:—

Year.	Mortality rate per mille.
1905	5.17
1906	9.37
1907	8.56
1949	.11
1950	.88
1951	.006
1952	.078
1953	.031
1954	.008

Year.					Mortality rate per mille.
1955	...	...	...	...	.02
1956	...	...	...	...	.004
1957	...	...	...	...	Nil
1958	...	...	...	...	.014
1959	...	...	...	...	Nil.
1960	...	...	...	...	.072

Small-pox

Small-pox breaks out occasionally in spite of the pushing up of the primary vaccination. Although this is compulsory for the whole of the district, it does not appear to have made a good progress particularly in the rural areas. There is a general apathy of the people to the primary vaccination done. There is still a deep belief that the small-pox is due to the rage of the Goddess *Sitalamai* and to please Her, the inmates and neighbours try to satisfy the whims and dictates of the patients which help the spread of the contagion. There has been a sort of quinquennial flare up of the disease and in 1951 there was an epidemic which recorded a total death of 584 persons in the district. The following chart shows the position of vaccinations from 1942 to 1960 as follows:—

Year.			Total number of vaccination performed.	Number of persons primarily vaccinated.	Number of successful vaccination.
1942	..	..	83,626	60,682	64,309
1943	..	..	91,311	69.986	75,176
1944	..	..	136,260	86,451	93,864
1945	..	..	379,959	43,044	73,403
1946	..	..	324,530	38,692	44,944
1947	..	..	94,455	44,113	44 291
1948	..	..	1,00,869	47,594	47.639
1949	..	..	1,02,847	40,602	48,876
1950	..	..	80,540	42,915	43,827
1951	..	..	4,66,428	64,947	70,018
1952	..	.	2,17,542	92,627	79,803
1953	..	..	2,40,867	64,486	61 272
1954	..	..	4,03,861	62,860	58,112
1955	..	..	6,33,808	93,471	64,457
1956	..	..	7,48,167	94,341	64.008
1957	..	..	70,080	76,756	72,743
1958	..	..	14,54,497	11,39,994	84,535
1959	..	..	66,782	60,440	51 306
1960	..	..	5,76,431	54,325	48,987

Malaria.

Purnea and malaria have been regarded as synonymous by medical and non-medical men within the living memory and statements regarding endemicity of malaria have been made from time to time by the various medical officers associated with the district. The malaria map of India compiled about the year 1925 by the malaria experts of the Government of India described this region to be an endemic home of malaria of more or less static character

The prevalence of malaria like any other crowd disease depends upon (*a*) reservoir of infection, (*b*) necessary environmental conditions for the propagation of the infection of disease and (*c*) a suitable soil for the seed in the shape of susceptible population

The existence of the reservoirs of malaria infection in Purnea district hardly needs any reiteration Nearly everywhere there are still many stagnant swamps and dead or dying rivers, large tracts are practically old beds and a great part of the country is under water during the rains Even Purnea town near Captain bridge presents a dismal bed of an old river almost choked with a luxuriant growth of water hyacinth The most important feature is that the villagers excavate earth very close to their living quarters for repair and improvement of their huts leaving behind ditches which serve as so many favourable foci for mosquito breeding Thus almost all types of breeding grounds are available in abundance throughout the length and breadth of the district Moreover, the neighbouring districts of West Bengal like Maldah and West Dinajpur and the *terai* regions of Darjeeling and Nepal lying contiguous to the borders of Purnea are well known homes of endemic and hyperendemic malaria The tract of North Bhagalpur on the western border of Kosi has also been declared to be malarious after scientific investigations The configuration of Purnea district as at present in spite of improvements cannot absolutely yet escape malaria

To consider the conditions suitable for transmission of malaria a study of the agricultural and meteorological reports becomes necessary Statistics indicate that about three fourths of the land devoted to agriculture, produces wet crops like paddy and jute so intimately associated with the prevalence of malaria specially the jute crop It is for this reason that Kishanganj subdivision which grows the maximum quantity of jute has the highest malaria incidence.

The rainfall, temperature and humidity conditions prevailing in the district compare very favourably with the breeding and prolongation of life of the anopheline mosquitoes.

Lastly comes the consideration of the victims of malaria or the susceptible population mentioned in the previous paragraph. The physique, the living conditions with their economic status which are as a rule acts adversely on the natural body resistance to diseases, the clothing and the housing conditions together with their complete ignorance of personal prophylaxis leave nothing more to be desired for the anopheline mosquitoes for feeding on human blood and introduction of the parasites into the system of their victims.

It may be mentioned here that the staggering fall in the index of the average milk intake of the people has acted as a great contributory factor in causing men more susceptible to malaria.

The malaria season in the district begins about the middle of July, reaches its peak in October and starts subsiding from the month of December. The curve seems to be lowest in the month of February and there is a slight suggestion for a spring rise in April. Rains start in June and are over in September. Severity of malaria starts during this period. Economic conditions in general are low. Due to mal-nutrition people are weak, anemic and have much less clothing than what they should. All this makes them susceptible to malaria. Aculiafacis which is a well-known vector species of this region was found resting in the dwelling houses. It was also found breeding in rice and jute fields.

Scientific investigations made so far have established that benign and malignant tertian parasites are the prevailing species and infection by quartan parasites is not very common.

Probably no other disease is responsible for a national loss of such a colossus magnitude as produced by this fever alone which probably has not yet established any immunity or adequate tolerance factor. Rather it may be said that an acute infestation stage is still persisting in the epidemiology of this disease.

Kala-Azar.

Next to malaria in sequence of predominance of fever producing diseases in the district is *Kala-Azar.* The name as it implies is also known as *'Kaladukkha'* amongst the natives of the soil and is derived probably from the characteristic dark pigmentation of the skin produced by it. It is a slow and wasting disease

with great and progressive debility. The fever generally shows a double rise though other types are not uncommon. Chief manifestations are enlargement of both liver and spleen, loss of natural lustre and falling off of hairs, prominence of the superficial veins specially over the abdominal wall, profound anaemia, cancrumoris and dropsy. These are usually associated with complications like epistaxis, bleeding from the gum, diarrhoea, dysentery, pneumonia, ascitis or general anasarce and even tuberculosis towards the end.

Kala-Azar like malaria is also spread all over the district, but in varying intensity. Broadly speaking the entire north-eastern zone of Purnea comprising the whole of Kishanganj subdivision, major part of Araria subdivision and Amur, Baisee and Kasba *thanas* of Sadar subdivision may be described as endemic home of *Kala-Azar.*

Typhoid.

Cases of both typhoid and paratyphoid group are reported at times, but scarcely they appear in wide scale.

Splenomegaly.

Hospital records indicate that Purnea is not free from this disease which is a common feature in tropical climates. This usually results after a long continued untreated or improperly treated suffering from recurrent attacks of malaria or *Kala-Azar* or both or other diseases resulting in cirrhotic changes in the liver and spleen.

Kala-Azar used to claim a lot of casualties before as there used to be diagnostic error and many cholera cases were treated as malarial or other diseases. *Kala-Azar* is also now amenable to certain definite treatment. The incidence of *Kala-Azar* has definitely gone down.

Goitre is still prevalent although the incidence has now perceptibly gone down. The Medical Officer of Kishanganj Hospital, however, showed statistics that more goitre cases have now been coming to Kishanganj Hospital (1960). It may be mentioned here that the region of Kishanganj where goitre is most prevalent is actually a continuation of the same zone of Bettiah in Champaran district. A team of doctors from the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi had recently paid several visits to the interior of Bettiah for goitre investigation. The results of the investigation are not yet known and will be taken advantage of in Kishanganj area also.

O'Malley's observation that deaf-mutism is more or less confined to certain *thanas* in varying degrees does not appear to be based on the present statistics.

Regarding leprosy and insanity, there is no reason to think that the incidence has gone up in any way. With the opening of more hospitals, people are definitely becoming more hospital minded and early detection and diagnosis have prevented many cases of leprosy and insanity. Regarding leprosy, however, it has been found that one village Gun *mela* in Barari *thana* has within the last decade become a home of lepers.

Tuberculosis.

The early available statistics indicate that the disease did not exist to any great extent in the district; but how far these figures can be depended upon is questionable. However, the incidence is found to be on increase as appears from the annual hospital returns given later. The increase in the incidence of tuberculosis appears to be an effect of malnutrition on the top of the existing devitalising diseases.

Trachoma and Conjuctivitis.

Eye affection like purulent conjunctivitis and trachoma is fairly common and is found prevalent almost throughout the district specially during the hot months of the year. Blindness is very often met with and is chiefly due to neglected inflammation of the eyes, poorness of constitution and the application of caustic remedies by the village people. Complete ignorance of post-natal cases acts as a contributory factor in producing blindness. The most common cases are those in which senile decay causes cataract and various forms of ulcerations, specially of cornea which though easily amenable to treatment in their early stages, are seldom submitted for treatment until vision has been hopelessly destroyed, and it is too late for any treatment to be of use.

Skin Diseases.

Eczema, Psoriasis and Prurigo are other skin affections which are met with quite often, specially amongst the poorer sections of the people.

Venereal Diseases.

Purnea is pre-eminently a district of *melas* and fairs of every description. They are held practically throughout the year excepting the rainy months, and generally in successive order. There are also some simultaneous *melas*. Arrangement for

brothels in these *melas* and fairs has been very, unfortunately, an adjunct. Even the important *hatias* and *bazars* of the district which sit on regular fixed days of the year are not free from this evil. Nomadic type of prostitutes visit *bazars* and *hatias* encouraged by the proprietors.

This evil is responsible for a high incidence of venereal diseases. The hospital figures for venereal diseases are not very high as would appear from the following table But it should be also taken into consideration that a very large section of such cases refrain from coming over to hospitals either for fear of publicity or due to strong belief that these ailments are more readily amenable to indigenous drugs practised by the village quacks.

TABLE.

Year.	Number of venereal diseases treated in hospitals.
1947	1,261
1948	1,362
1949	1,536
1950	1,024
1951	1,631
1952	2,085
1953	2,372
1954	2,454
1955	2,375
1956	1,929
1957	2,079
1958	1,887
1959	1,976
1960 (up to November 1960)	1,606

The Immoral Traffic Act has been brought into force in this district but not tightened up.

Anaemia.

Anaemia due to various diseases is quite frequent of which the following are commonly associated with greater or lesser degree of anaemia.—(1) Hookworm infection, (2) Malaria, (3) *Kala-Azar,* (4) Pregnancy, (5) Chronic dysentery. In each of these diseases the anaemia has in addition a nutritional background of varying degrees.

Diarrhoea and Dysentery.

Water borne diseases like diarrhoea and dysentery are very common here, particularly in the hot weather, and also when

the paddy seedlings are being planted out and the labourers have to remain all day up to their knees in water. In the summer months they are often caused by consumption of unripe fruits and frequently prepare the way for outbreak of cholera. Bacillary dysentery at times breaks out in epidemic form taking a heavy toll of lives which is usually misrepresented in the *thana* mortality returns by village *chowkidars* as cholera. Children under teens generally become victims to this disease.

Amoebic dysentery is almost endemic here like other diseases of the tropics and a fair number of Giardia cases are also met with.

Helminth Infections.

Hookworm, round worm and threadworm cases are fairly common here and the north-eastern zone of the district is worst affected. Of these the Hookworm infection has the highest incidence and often found associated with other disease and if left untreated unsually results in deficiency syndromes. Tape worm cases are reported very rarely.

INCIDENCE OF PRINCIPAL DISEASES.

The following chart shows the incidence during the 15 years from 1946 to 1960. These figures are only for patients attending a hospital (allopathic) and are for the same reason not very comprehensive and reliable so far the incidence in the district as a whole. Many are treated otherwise in different system and by quacks.

—	Malaria.	*Kala-Azar.*	Cholera.	T. B.	Ankylostomiasis.
1	2	3	4	5	6
1946 ..	2,73,057	24,745	263	1,447	2,571
1947 ..	2,54,126	19,917	297	1,302	1,715
1948	2,08,902	18,407	309	1,368	1,908
1949 ..	2,24,288	17,834	197	1,468	1,501
1950 ..	1,39,398	11,092	169	1,229	1,295
1951 ..	1,14,108	8,004	200	1,668	2,383
1952 ..	1,75,374	9,984	302	1,345	1,456
1953 ..	1,13,854	6,853	116	1,416	2,027
1954 ..	1,10,470	6,054	140	2,554	7,857
1955 ..	94,454	4,160	66	1,402	2,991
1956 ..	93,275	3,765	3	1,496	3,647
1957 ..	93,564	3,261	Nil	1,487	3,906
1958 ..	92,682	2,984	84	1,509	3,761
1959 ..	92,271	2,793	Nil	1,663	3,564
1960 ..	..	..	..	..	..

It will be seen from the above that there is a progressive decrease in the incidence of malaria, *Kala-Azar* and cholera, whereas it is steady in the case of T. B. and hookworm infection. The clear case in the incidence in malaria and *Kala-Azar* is due to improved and advanced method of treatment through newly discovered drugs and spraying of insecticides, etc. The general low condition of health due to poverty and low living condition in damp surroundings are responsible for the steady increase of T. B. and ankylostomiases With the general rise in the standard of living and education these also will be slowly going down.

With the progress of the 2nd Plan it is hoped that most of the rural areas which are gradually coming under the Community Development or National Extension Service Blocks will be benefited with the various plans made by the Health Department. The schemes like Maternity and Child Welfare confined only to urban areas are now gradually spreading in rural areas and people are found to take advantage of facilities provided thereby, which will help to a great extent in the education of conducting delivery and both ante and post-natal care and preventing maternal and infantile mortality.

The new subdivision of Katihar has been started in 1956 and the hospital with 26 beds (20 male and 6 female) there has been provincialised since 15th July 1955.

A portion of the district towards the eastern side of the Kishanganj subdivision with seven dispensaries has gone over to West Bengal from 1st November 1956.

Public Hospitals and Dispensaries

The earlier history of Purnea Hospital has been given. In 1934, during the great Earthquake, the hospital buildings were badly damaged. In 1937-38, the abandoned site of the old Zila School was made over by Government to the Hospital Committee together with such buildings which though badly damaged were not condemned by the P. W. D. In the same year, a sum of Rs. 1,20,700 was sanctioned out of Earthquake grant for the construction of the present and existing building and the European Ward. The total expenditure on the construction amounted to Rs. 1,22,254. The outdoor department was completed in March, 1939 at a cost of Rs. 16,533 out of special donation from Late Kumar Ramanand Sinha of Garhbanaili and Rai Bahadur Raghubans Prasad Singh of Kursela. The quarters for the menial servants were constructed out of the Divisional Commissioner's grant. The main hospital building which exists today

stands on the site of the old Zila School providing accommodation for 103 beds. It comprises of 5 wards connected with each other by covered corridors. In the centre is the surgical ward. On the either side are the female and male medical wards. The administration and operation sections are in front and behind. With a view to keep the wards cool, hollow walls have been provided and sun shades have been fitted in the verandah. The outdoor block is situated on the roadside in front of the main building. There have been gradual addition of Septic Ward, T. B. Ward, Isolation Ward, building for T. B. Clinic and the quarters for the Medical Officer and staff. The hospital has got more accommodation of beds. The hospital has got its water and sanitary installation at a cost of Rs. 12,707 which were installed in the year 1940. The hospital has been also equipped with an up-to-date X-Ray plant with a powerful generator. The old machine being out of order another machine is now being fitted. Electrification is an acute wanting feature of an average uptodate hospital. The T. B. Clinic was started working since 1938 with a full-fledged trained Medical Officer which is rendering valuable services to the people of the district. T. B. Ward newly constructed has also been added to the Sadar Hospital with 10 beds The Sadar Hospital was provincialised with other Sadar Hospitals in the year 1944. The following figures will speak about the increasing activities of this growing institution:—

—	1905	1930	1940	1950	1960
1	2	3	4	5	6
Total no. of beds—Indoor patients (new).	20	76	103	116	180
		1,389	2,163	2,892	4,538
		59·08			
Indoor patients daily average.	..	..	135·22	128·97	218·74
Outdoor patients (new).	..	22 262	32,708	21,479	24,570
Outdoor patients daily average.	..	147·11	290·63	152·58	167·47
Operations (selected)	..	155	382	494	1,327
Total operations ..	..	749	1,554	1,217	2,311

In 1905, there were only 16 dispensaries, four receiving indoor patients while others were only outdoor dispensaries. Gradually there has been tremendous development in the district. Today there are 63 dispensaries of whom six are indoor hospitals having a total of 238 beds. In addition to this, there are about 30 malaria and 8 *Kala-Azar* centres. The figures noted below will be of interest:—

Area—

1.	Sadar subdivision	2,505 sq. miles
2.	Araria subdivision	1,077 sq. miles
3.	Kishanganj subdivision	1,390 sq. miles
	Total	4,972 sq. miles

Population—

		1951 Census.
1.	Sadar subdivision ..	14,30,638
2.	Araria subdivision ..	5,39,028
3.	Kishanganj subdivision ..	5,61,373

Density of population—.

1.	Sadar subdivision ..	571.11 per sq. mile
2.	Araria subdivision ..	500.49 per sq mile
3.	Kishanganj subdivision	403.86 per sq mile

Number of indoor beds.	1905	1951
1. Sadar Subdivision.—		
(a) Sadar Hospital	20	116 beds.
(b) Katihar Hospital .. .	5	16 beds.
(c) Police Hospital ..	Nil	18 beds
(d) B. M. P.	Nil	20 beds.
2. Araria Hospital	6	32 beds.
3. Kishanganj	10	26 beds.
Total ..	41	228 beds.

Population.	Ratio of beds to population.	No. of beds to 1,000 of the population.
Sadar Subdivision—14,30,638 ..	1 to 8,415	118
Araria Subdivision 5,39,028 ..	1 to 16,844	·059
Kishanganj Subdivision—5 61,373 ..	1 to 21,591	·046

The total number of beds in Bihar calculated at 6,025 and Purnea offers beds out of that. The relation of beds to population is 1 to 6,675 for Bihar while in Purnea 1 to 11,101. The number of beds to 1,000 of population is as follows:—

Bihar—0.166.

Purnea—.090.

(*a*) *Maternity and Child Welfare.*—There is one maternity and child welfare centre in the district located within the premises of Purnea Sadar Hospital which started in the year 1938.

There is a midwife who attends the centres in the morning hours every day for distribution of milk and vitamins to the children and expectant mothers attending the centre. She also attends the normal labour cases within the municipal areas

The Lady Doctor attached to the Sadar Hospital, Purnea attends the centre once a week and takes anti-natal cases. Recently steps are being taken to get one Lady Health Visitor for this centre to increase its efficiency. The following table shows how the centre is gaining popularity through its noble mission:—

—	1945	1950	1951	1959
Total attendance of children	1,043	3,365	10,875	18,926
Daily average	2·86	10·75	29 79	51·98
Total attendance of expectant and nursing mothers.	..	..	1,557	15,703
Daily average	..	..	5·66	43·02
Total number of post-natal cases visited.	350	..	402	830

(*b*) *Birth Control Clinic.*—There is no such arrangement at present. But its utility and necessity are being felt by the people very strongly and as such inception of such a clinic is expected soon. Every advice on these matters and other help are given to the desirous people by the Medical Officers attached to the Sadar Hospital under recent Government instructions. The Lady Doctor of the Sadar Hospital has been given special training on these matters.

(*c*) *Leper Asylum.*—There is no leper asylum in the district. But Government is contemplating to provide every hospital with a leprosy clinic well equipped with modern drugs and other accessories of treatment.

(*d*) *T. B. Clinic Sanatorium.*—There is no T. B. Sanatorium in this district. There is, however, a T. B clinic to see outdoor ambulatory cases with one specially trained honorary medical officer attached to the clinic. The clinic started functioning since 1938. In the Sadar Hospital a new ten-bedded T B. ward has been constructed.

(*e*) *Children's Ward.*—There is no special arrangement for admitting and treating children in a separate ward. But its need is being felt acutely and the creation of a ten-bedded children's ward is well under contemplation.

(*f*) *Geriatrics.*—It is being gradually realised by the people that the old and aged very badly require a separate hospital and separate line of treatment just as the children require a separate hospital than the general adult population. But this has not as yet acquired any practical shape.

(*g*) *World Health Organisation.*—There is no special branch of this organisation in this district. But powdered milk and vitamin tablets, etc., are supplied free from time to time by this organisation and distributed to the needy people through selected agencies

(*h*) *X-Ray Radiotherapy and Electrotherapeutics.*—The first X'Ray installation in the district came into being in the year 1940 as an improvement to Purnea Sadar Hospital. Of late a second installation has been made at Katihar by a Medical Graduate who is a private practitioner there. Up till now arrangement for Radiotherapy does not exist in the district. There is at present no arrangement of proper Electro-therapeutics in this district except on private practitioner at Bhatta. Arrangement to provide for ultra-violet infra-red and inducto-thenmy apparatus in Sadar Hospital are under contemplation.

(*i*) No medical research appears to have been done for decades.

VILLAGE SANITATION.

Truly speaking the villages are mostly insanitary. Most of the houses of two or three badly designed illventilated huts with thin mud plastered *tatti* walls. and mud floors and thatched roofs—often huddled together in more or less compact areas are situated in the midst of the fields which provide means of livelihood. A few and far between tiled or *pucca* roofs are seen which indicate prosperous land-owning classes. Cattle are kept near some of the huts, but in most cases cattle, goats, fowls and dogs share the

huts with the people. Scarcely there is any regular road inside the village. The lanes and pathways as they are in existence become muddy or even water-logged in the wet weather. No organised conservancy service exists in the villages. The lanes and pathways are seldom swept and refuge and house sweepings are deposited for the most part on some convenient spot in or outside the huts. There are no latrines, except that some of the fairly well-to-do inhabitants use pit privies which are known as '*sandas*'. The fields and vacant plots of lands in close proximity to the villages often within a few yards from the huts are used in place of lavatory by the majority of the population.

These insanitary surroundings and housing conditions coupled with the nature of drinking water whose purity can never be vouchsafed and above all the absolute ignorances of the general people about the elementary laws of health and hygiene and also so many deep-rooted superstitions make the villages infernally dirty and favourite homes of all sorts of diseases.

To improve the sanitation of these villages by educating the general people in the elementary ideas of health and sanitation and in the simple methods of preventing epidemic diseases and also for taking immediate and adequate measures to combat epidemics the State Government has formulated a scheme known as the "interim rural and urban public health scheme" and has given effect to it through various local bodies.

The scheme envisages a uniform and efficient organisation for all the districts within the State of Bihar consisting of the following personnel who will work under the supervision and guidance of a qualified District Health Officer:—

(1) One Assistant Health Officer for each subdivision of the district.

(2) One trained Sanitary Inspector for every two *thanas* of the district.

(3) One trained Health Inspector for every *thana* of the district:

(4) One Vaccinator for every 30,000 population of the district.

(5) Two disinfectors for each *thana* of the district.

The scheme is already functioning here. But its success would ultimately depend on the extent of co-operation it receives from the general mass, which can be expected only when the workers are dynamic and the people responsive.

In addition to this the Government supplement the resources of the local bodies by supply of additional drugs, disinfectants and staff to face emergencies.

With the same object in view and to inculcate amongst the willing youth of the country the most essential matters relating to medical and public health the State Government has introduced "*Gram Sewak*" Training Scheme since 1950. The trainees get elementary practical and theoretical training on the causation, spread and prevention of the epidemic diseases, village sanitation, community hygiene and first-aid for minor injuries.

The idea is that these *gram sewaks* would supplement the regular public health organisation of the district and would form the nucleus of the self contained village unit as envisaged by the Government.

MALARIA CONTROL SCHEMES.

Till the advent of insecticides like Pyrethrum, Malarial and D. D. T. and their use in the field of Anti-malaria operations undertaken only curative relief was extended to the ailing people by way of distributing quinine and quinine substitutes like mepacrine or paludrine tablets through the agencies of various hospitals, dispensaries, Malaria and *Kala-Azar* centres and public health staff of the district. In August, 1949 the Anti-malaria Scheme, Bihar raised one Malaria Control Unit in the district of Purnea with its headquarters at Kishanganj to combat malaria in the worst affected villages of Kishanganj subdivision.

Before attempting any malaria control measures in the affected villages it was considered essential to survey the areas with a view to record the endemicity and compare it after the completion of control measures. Accordingly, 293 villages, covering an area of 216 sq. miles in P.-S. Kishanganj, Goalpokhar and Islampur were taken up for the purpose of recording endemicity. During the course of investigation it was revealed that the area under survey was 'hyperendemic' as it recorded the spleen rate which varied from 80 per cent to 100 per cent. Subsequently, the State Government was pleased to introduce two special schemes in the Kishanganj subdivision thought to be the hyperendemic zone of the district.

These schemes known as the 'Anti-malaria' Scheme and the 'Pilot Anti-malaria' Scheme include spraying of houses with D. D. T. and other prophylactic and curative measures like distribution of mosquito repellent pomades and Paludrine tablets. D. D. T. House spraying operations were started in all the villages

in December, 1949, and repeated applications of D. D. T. were given during the malaria transmission periods of 1950 and 1951. It has now been found that the spleen rate which varied from 80 per cent to 100 per cent in 1949 before starting control measures has now come down to 53 per cent after D. D. T. application. Spraying operations have become popular and need is felt for establishment of such control unit in other highly malarious places of the district.

Of late the Government has drawn out a much more wider scheme almost on the same line as a part of its Five-Year Plan and calculated to afford protection to about one million people residing in the worst affected areas of this district, mostly along the areas bordering Nepal and Bengal.

The scheme includes spraying of houses with D. D. T, distribution of Paludrine tablets, recording of spleen index and examination of blood slides for parasites. One such unit has been assigned for this district whose headquarters will be located at Kishanganj with a well equipped laboratory. Four sub-units would be working under this main unit.

The main unit and the sub-units would be run by specially trained officers and adequate number of staff, motor vehicles and other necessary equipments would be provided to them for the smooth and successful operation of the scheme which is going to start very soon.

SOCIAL MEDICINE AND HYGIENE.

The people are no doubt getting more and more conscious of living a healthy life irrespective of their social status and vocations. Men have started thinking both individually and conjointly that healthy surroundings make people healthy, that proper nutrition for both body and soul are the principal guiding factors for a healthy life, that protection against all probable injuries to health are the essential facts of consideration.

All these culminated in the inception in the district of organisations like *Gram Panchayats,* Co-operative Societies, *Gramudyogs, Sarvodaya's* schemes, Children's physical culture clubs, and arrangements to afford necessary medical and hygienic protections and other amenities to the industrial workers.

The *Gram Panchayats* are provided with *Gram Sewaks* who are specially trained in the elementary knowledge of health, hygiene and physical culture, which they inculcate amongst the villagers.

The co-operative societies particularly look after and extend necessary help in the improvement of agriculture and livestock of the village which are so closely related with the raising of the nutritional standard of the food intake of a locality.

The *Gramudyog* amongst other activities also deals in the production of pure and wholesome food articles like whole rice, '*chakki*' made flour, '*ghani*' made mustard oil, etc., which go a great way in the improvement of people's health.

The *Sarvodaya* schemes run almost in the line of the all-India community projects. The fundamental principle of the scheme is to make every individual of the society healthy, wealthy and self-sufficient without being dependent on others. For the present two such schemes are running in the district—one at Ranipatra in Sadar *thana* which is more organised and extensive, the other at Kursela in Barari *thana*.

At present there is only one well equipped and organised children's physical culture club located at Bhatta within the Purnea Municipal area. It is run under the guidance and supervision of a specially trained instructor. Besides, some sort of physical culture is practised in most of the schools of the district.

To protect the industrial workers Government have enforced regulations for the proper safety of these workers and for their health. Government have also insisted for making provision for them in respective areas for adequate accommodation, recreation, limitation of working hours, labour welfare centres, etc. Beyond these the social medicine is yet unknown in this district.

DRUG CONTROL.

There was no rule prior to 1943 regarding control of manufacture, sale, purchase, stocking and dispensing of drugs. But since then the 'Bihar Control Act' has come into force and manufacture, sale, etc., have been regulated to a considerable extent.

RECENT HEALTH SURVEYS.

Amongst the recent health surveys made in the district malaria survey comes foremost. Surveys on *Kala-Azar* and Hookworm were taken up in the district in 1938, by Colonel Cooke, the then Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals, Bihar, but details of these surveys are not available. A nutrition survey was also carried out in the district in the year 1951 by the Nutrition Officer, Bihar and the detailed report may be obtained from his office.

Malaria Survey.

Probably the first attempt to assess scientifically the incidence of malaria was made in the year 1908. The Kishanganj *thana* of the district was chosen as the site of investigation. apparently being badly affected area in the district at the time. It is said that "the people did not take kindly to the investigation and utmost difficulty was experienced in examining children for the enlargement of spleen. Owing to the opposition of the parents it was found impossible to obtain blood slides for the endemic index." The investigation thus proved infructuous and had to be abandoned.

The first scientific report on the incidence of malaria in the district was compiled at about 1930 by Dr. A. N. Chatterjee, Assistant Director of Public Health, Bihar, after a survey of the Purnea town conducted by him.

Subsequently a more extensive malaria survey was taken up by the Government in this district along with the other parts of North Bihar which started in the month of October, 1940 and continued till 30th April, 1941. Twenty-one villages were taken up, ten from Islampur *thana* with a traditional reputation of malaria and eleven from Dhamdaha *thana* where malaria was said to be making its first ravages. Briefly speaking the following findings were arrived at based on scientific data.

The rainfall, temperature and humidity conditions were found to be very favourable for the breeding of the anopheline mosquitoes. About 40,000 adults anopheline philippinensis was thought to be responsible for the transmission of malaria in these areas.

More than 90 per cent of the children in the Islampur study area were found to be harbouring enlarged spleen, whereas the spleen rate of Dhamdaha area varied between 18 to 46 per cent. Examination of blood slides revealed that 40 per cent of the children in the Islampur study area were harbouring malaria parasites in their peripheral blood, and the percentage in Dhamdaha area was only 9.

All the three varieties of plasmodium could be detected, but bengin and malignant tertian parasites were found prevailing and infection by quartan parasites was in the lowest.

DISTRIBUTION OF REGISTERED MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS IN TOWNS AND VILLAGES.

No departure from the general rule is observed here as in other parts of the State that the registered medical practitioners always prefer to settle in urban areas than in rural areas. It leads

sometimes to overcrowding in the towns and the need of the villages remains acute for all the time. However, to give a rough picture of the distribution of registered medical practitioners of the district in towns and villages a calculation has been worked out on the basis of the number of such practitioners available and total population of a particular town or *thana* The figures given in the following Table show the total population of the towns and *thanas* of the district and the number of people served by one registered practitioner on the average in each of these towns and *thanas*.

TABLE.

Names of towns and thanas	Total population.	Number of peoples served by one registered practitioner.
Purnea Municipality ..	25,515 ..	1,063
Katihar Municipality including Railway colony.	42,580 ..	2,129
Kishanganj Municipality ..	15,902 ..	1,136
Forbesganj Municipality ..	11,565 ..	1.927
Sadar thana	93,430 ..	3,114
Kasba thana	49,960 ..	16,653
Khajanchihat thana ..	19,732 ..	822
Amour thana	1,01,804 ..	25,451
Baisee thana	64,648 ..	16,162
Dhamdaha thana.. ..	1,34,512 ..	44,837
Rupouli thana ..	1,02,749 ..	34,249
Dharhara thana	95,137 ..	45,568
Korha thana ..	1,01,620 ..	25,405
Barari thana	93,169 ..	15,528
Karandighi thana transferred to West Bengal in November, 1956.	77,746 ..	25,915
Kadwa thana	76,219 ..	15,244
Barsoe thana	71,368 ..	10,196
Azamnagar thana ..	72,608 ..	72,608
Katihar thana	1,05,417 ..	13,177
Manihari thana	1,02,424 ..	34,141
Kishanganj thana transferred to West Bengal in November, 1956.	85,584 ..	10,698

Names of towns and thanas.	Total population.		Number of people served by one registered practitioner.
Goalpokher thana transferred to West Bengal in November, 1956.	35,717	..	35,717
Bahadurganj thana ..	1,26,645	..	15,830
Dighalbank thana ..	34,642	..	Nil.
Terhagachh thana ..	33,971	..	16,985
Islampur thana transferred to West Bengal in November, 1956.	99,903	..	16,650
Chopra thana transferred to West Bengal in November, 1956.	56,030	..	28,015
Thakurganj thana transferred to West Bengal in November, 1956.	72,979	..	10,426
Araria thana	1,45,967	..	16,218
Palasy thana	49,643	..	24,821
Sikty thana	32,074	..	32,074
Forbesganj thana ..	1,04,539	..	17,423
Raniganj thana	1,16,949	..	58,474
Narpatganj thana ..	78,291	..	15,658

Common Indigenous Herbs.

It is understood that a large number of herbs used for *Kabiraji* system of medicine are found in Purnea district. A person interested in indigenous medicinal herbs claims that among other herbs the following are available:—

Gurich (Giloi), *Satabar, Nagkeshar, Koraiya, Cohatian, Dashmul, Kantakari, Gokhuru, Kalmegh, Sonapatta, Gamhar, Arjun, Ashoke, Talmuli, Shivlinghi, Brahmi, Bhringraj, Motha, vakas, Indrajav, Neem, Hastisundi, Chita, Gandhprasarni, Bhumi Amla, Rakta Kamal, Aranda, Gajar, Bale, Katrakeja. Punamawa, Maidakath, Sarpagandha, Chiraiyakanga, Hansaraj, Amaltas, Harsiki, Bahera, Amla, Dhatur, Aak, Bhanga, Anantamool, Guava, Salmuli, Singhara, Sringadhar, Subwar, Gular, Pepew, Tulsi, Babul, Bantulsi, Katrangni, Katkareja, Agarmasta, Pdina, Ananas, Makhan, Gheekumar, Iechain.*

It may be mentioned that in Purnea district a herbal oil commonly known as Araria oil or Gaffur Baksh oil is largely used for bad ulcer and chronic sinus. It is understood that the oil has taken the name after Gaffur Mian, a Mohammedan *Fakir*. The herb consists of the leaves of a creeper. It is said that the ingredient is mixed with mustard oil and boiled in a copper receptacle. Many doctors of the Purnea district are convinced of its efficacy.

A statement of the strength of the hospitals and the number of patients examined from 1955—60.

Strength.	Indoor.	Outdoor.	Year.
ARARIA SUBDIVISIONAL HOSPITAL.			
Two Assistant Civil Surgeons, one Lady Assistant Civil Surgeon.	8,715	31,504	1955
	11,878	45,767	1956
	13,927	61,440	1957
	10,981	51,149	1958
	12,249	38,258	1959
	15,044	36,333	1960 (October)
KISHANGANJ SUBDIVISIONAL HOSPITAL.			
Four Assistant Surgeons, one Lady Assistant Surgeon.	66,014	52,057	1955
	62,238	43,340	1956
	65,271	52,992	1957
	67,972	47,884	1958
	70,455	68,427	1959
	66,499	50,911	1960 (October.)
SADAR HOSPITAL.			
Not available.			
KATIHAR HOSPITAL.			
Two Assistant Surgeons, one Lady Assistant Surgeon.	409	15,693	1955
	649	17,318	1956
	964	22,862	1957
	1,028	20,865	1958
	1,415	30,448	1959
	1,335	26,023	1960 (October.) up-to-date.

CHAPTER XVI.

OTHER SOCIAL SERVICES.

Labour Welfare.

The labourers of the district may broadly be divided into two categories—agricultural and industrial. About 50 per cent of the agricultural labourers required particularly for the harvesting of the crops come from the districts of Saharsa, Bhagalpur, Darbhanga, Saran and Champaran. The seasonal influx of agricultural labourers is mostly due to a certain amount of allergy on the part of the classes of the district that would have normally supplied the agricultural labourers. No particular investigation has been made as to the reasons but generally it is held that the people are lethargic and averse to such manual labour. This theory, however, cannot be pushed too far as the ploughing of the fields and cutting of jute are done by local labour

No particular welfare measures are taken for the agricultural labourers. The Minimum Wages Act of 1948 has been formally made applicable but owing to the fluidity of the labourers and the urgency of employing them during particular seasons, the labourers normally get more than the stipulated wages. The want of restrictions on the mobility of the agricultural labourers is a factor which reacts on the employers of such labourers. Unless there is a rampant epidemic in the district there has not been any dearth of agricultural labourers.

Regarding the labourers employed in different industries, the Labour Office, Purnea puts their figures at 13,600 and estimates that about 50 per cent belong to the district of Purnea and the rest come from West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and other districts of Bihar. The highly skilled and the supervisory staff come mostly from districts other than Purnea.

The town of Katihar with its suburbs is fast developing into an important industrial zone and will very soon be playing a great role in the industrialisation of Bihar. The main industry is associated with jute. Katihar has two large jute factories while the urban areas of Kishanganj, Forbesganj and Jogbani have jute presses employing a large number of men. The other industries employing labourers are in rice, oil, flour, timber, sawing mills, cold storage, etc. There is a separate chapter for Industries.

Katihar has got a Match Factory, which after a closure for several years, has started functioning since 1960.

It is only the two jute mills at Katihar that offer some welfare amenities to their employees. The mills are R. B. H. M. Jute Mill and Katihar Jute Mill.

Both the mills have canteens catering tea and snacks at cheap rates, rest shelters and washing places. R. B. H. M. Jute Mill alone has provided a creche with accommodation for eight children under a nurse Ample drinking water facilities have been provided. Regarding medical aid both the mills have dispensaries with a part-time medical Officer. The dispensaries, however, mostly give first aid and send the more serious cases to the local dispensary of Employees State Insurance Corporation.

Housing Facilities.

Both the jute mills provide houses for their workers who are not residents of Katihar. In Katihar Jute Mill there are only 292 quarters of which 80 are for employees drawing monthly salaries. These quarters are built of bricks and called *pucca* quarters. Each of these quarters has two bed rooms each 12′ × 8′ one kitchen and one latrine The remaining 212 quarters meant for weekly wage earners are also brick-built and have single room each 12′ × 6′ and a small verandah which is used as a kitchen but have no latrines

In R. B. H. M. Jute Mill there are only 206 quarters out of which 147 quarters have been allotted to the weekly wage-earners and the remaining to the employees earning monthly salary. The quarters provided are similar to those in Katihar Jute Mill. The quarters in both the mills have common wells

The housing facilities provided cannot, however, be said to be adequate and a big percentage of workers live in rented quarters and in some cases one small room is shared by two or more persons. The bulk of the workers who hail from outside live without their family and in rather congested manner.

Educational Facilities.

There is one L. P. school run by the R. B H. M. Jute Mill at Goshala Mohalla, Katihar. The mill employs a teacher. There are about 35 students in the school. The Katihar Jute Mill has provided no educational facility for the children of its workers.

Each of the jute mills employs a Labour Welfare Officer who looks after the welfare of the workers of the mills.

The workers in other industrial undertakings have not been provided with any of these amenities by their employers.

Labour Welfare Centre at Katihar.

Besides these, the Labour Welfare Centre, Katihar, managed by the Labour Department, Government of Bihar, provides for social, cultural and physical well-being of the workers. The Labour Welfare Officer who is directly in charge of the centre looks after the welfare of the labourers and their dependants.

Library.

A library is attached to the centre which contains 1,100 Hindi, 104 Urdu and 50 Bengali books. Besides these it subscribes 1 English, 1 Hindi and 1 Urdu daily newspaper and 10 Hindi periodicals. It is attended by only 15 or 16 labourers a day.

Handicraft Section.

It has a handicraft section through which it trains female workers and female dependents of male workers in sewing, cutting and knitting through the Lady Welfare Officer and an Instructress. They give training batchwise The average daily attendance in this section is about 60

Recreation Section.

The centre has a recreation section and provides recreation through radio, cinema shows and drama It also provides training in music, through part-time teacher and has got an assortment of musical instruments for the purpose.

Sports Section.

The centre has a sports and game section both for indoor and outdoor games.

Health Propaganda Section.

The centre has got one health propaganda section and is provided with a propaganda van fitted with loud-speaker and arrangements for showing slides and cinema films. A propaganda assistant employed in this section carries on propaganda for better health in the locality.

Maternity and Child Welfare Section.

There are two *dais* for attending maternity cases through whom the function of this section is carried out. They conducted 120 deliveries and 1,834 pre-natal and post-natal cases of the ladies and children in the year 1959.

Employees State Insurance Scheme.

The Employees State Insurance Corporation insures workers against sickness, injury, permanent partial disablement and death.

This scheme was introduced in 1957 in Purnea district with its headquarters at Katihar. The administrative head is a Manager posted at Katihar.

Out of the 13,600 industrial workers in the district of Purnea only 7,000 persons of all categories had been insured till the year 1960.

The workers derive the following benefits from the scheme —

(*a*) Cash benefit consisting of—

(*i*) Sickness benefit, (*ii*) Maternity benefit, (*iii*) Disablement benefit, (*iv*) Dependent benefit.

(*b*) Benefit in kind consisting of medical benefit

Sickness benefit.—Sickness benefit is paid at half the daily average wage of the person concerned for the period of certified sickness The total period of such benefit is 56 days during any continuous period of 365 days The number of persons benefited under this scheme in 1960 was 2,569.

Maternity benefit—Maternity benefit is paid to an insured woman worker It is paid at the sickness benefit rate or at 75 nP. a day whichever is higher It is payable for 12 weeks of which not more than 6 weeks should precede the expected day of confinement In addition to this, an insured woman worker will be entitled to Sickness benefit as well in case of other sickness. But sickness and maternity benefit cannot be enjoyed concurrently. The number of persons benefited under this scheme in 1960 was 21

Disablement benefit—In case of temporary disablement, benefit is payable roughly at half the average daily wage. It commences from the first day of incapacity provided the disablement exceeds 7 days The number of persons benefited under this scheme in 1960 was 1[illegible]7.

In case of permanent partial disablement, benefit will be paid in the form of life pension at a rate depending upon the degree of disablement as determined by an independent Medical Board. In case of permanent total disablement, the benefit will be payable as life pension at the rate of temporary disablement. The number of persons benefited under this scheme in 1960 was 51.

Dependent benefit.—If an employment injury results in the death of an insured person, his dependents, that is the widow of the deceased insured person and his children, and in their absence the parents of the insured deceased person or other dependents will receive the dependent benefit. The benefit for the widow will be payable for life or till she remarries, and the sons and unmarried daughters will be entitled to it up to the age of 15 years or, if they are receiving education to the satisfaction of the Corporation, up to the age of 18 years. The widow will receive 3/5th and the children 2/5th of the full rate of temporary disablement. In the absence of these, the parents or other dependents of the deceased insured person will be paid at a rate to be decided by the Employees State Insurance Corporation. The persons benefited under this head in 1960 was nil

Insured employees suffering from T. B. will get extended cash and medical benefit The payment of cash benefit has been enhanced from 126 days in a year to 309 days in a year in cases of insured persons suffering from T B, Leprosy and mental diseases. The persons benefited under this scheme in 1960 was 18.

Medical benefit—There is a hospital at Katihar under this scheme exclusively for persons insured under it and their dependents. The hospital has no building of its own It is housed in a residential quarters which was meant for a Labour Officer It is situated in the compound of the Welfare Centre at Katihar There are three Medical Officers, five Compounders, three Dressers, two Technicians and three Female attendants in this hospital.

The medical benefit includes general medical service, hospitalisation of deserving cases, supply of necessary drugs and dressing, specialist services, domiciliary visit when required, maternity services and emergency treatment in cases of accident, preventive treatment as vaccination and inoculation, provision of certificates free of cost in respect of sickness. maternity, employment, injury and death

The average daily attendance of outdoor patients in this hospital is about 325. The emergency cases are sent to Katihar Civil Hospital and Purnea Sadar Hospital. There are two beds reserved for the patients under this scheme in Katihar Civil Hospital and 5 beds in Sadar Hospital, Purnea. At Sadar Hospital, out of these 5 beds four are reserved in the General Ward and one in the T. B. Ward. Serious cases are sent to Darbhanga Medical College Hospital for treatment. One bed is reserved at Itki Sanatorium, Ranchi for T. B. patients under this scheme.

In order to obtain the medical benefits enumerated above, a declaration form has to be filled in respect of each insured employees and identity cards are issued for establishing identity at the time of claiming benefit from this scheme.

Welfare Facilities by Railways to the Employees at Katihar.

Purnea district has two railway systems.—(1) the N. E. Railway and (2) the N. F Railway. The part of the railway system running west of Katihar and west of Purnea is managed by N. E. Railway and is unimportant as far as the number of employees is concerned. The most important railway in Purnea district is N. F. Railway and it covers the remaining portion of the railway system. The very important railway junction at Katihar is under the control of N. F. Railway.

The N. E. Railway provides only housing facilities for its employees at each station under its control. It does not provide any other facility.

Welfare amenities supplied by the N. F. Railway to its employees at Katihar.

Housing facilities.—At Katihar there are 2,060 employees of Grade III and 2,495 of Grade IV For the employees of Grade III there are 966 two-roomed quarters with kitchen, latrine and a verandah, and for Grade IV employees there are 533 one-roomed quarters without any separate kitchen and no latrine One common latrine has been provided for every two such quarters. The remaining employees have to shift for themselves in the town. The water-supply is obtained from wells and tube-wells. There are condemned goods wagons which are used to house 20 Grade IV employees. The housing facilities provided are inadequate.

Recreational facilities.—There are two institutes for railway employees called (1) the Senior Institute and the other, (2) the Rala Ram Railway Institute Both institutes are open to all employees of the railway and provide a library each, with a reading room and provision for indoor and outdoor games. The library of the Senior Institute has only Bengali books numbering 500. It also subscribes 2 Bengali and 2 English magazines and one English and one Bengali newspaper.

The average number of books issued daily is 8 and the average number of readers attending the library daily is 10. The indoor games provided are playing cards, table tennis and carom and are attended by approximate 30 persons daily. The only outdoor game provided is tennis which is played once in a week.

The Rala Ram Railway Institute has 848 English, 749 Hindi, 3,324 Bengali and 238 Urdu books. It subscribes 2 English, 2 Bengali and 1 Hindi newspapers and 1 English, 1 Hindi and 4 Bengali periodicals.

The average number of books issued daily is 60 and the average number of readers attending the reading room is 30. The indoor games provided are carom, chess, playing cards and table tennis and are attended on an average by 80 persons. The outdoor games provided are volleyball and football and are attended by on an average 40 persons daily.

Medical facilities.—The railway has provided a hospital for the free treatment of its employees and their dependents at Katihar. The hospital has a building of its own. It has 31 indoor beds besides provision for treatment of outdoor patients The average daily attendance of outdoor patients is 133.

For the hospital there is one District Medical Officer, seven male Assistant Surgeons, one Lady Assistant Surgeon, besides nurses and other subordinate staff.

Besides the hospital staff a staff for maintaining sanitation is maintained by the railway administration. The railway colony has a neater outer-look than the congested *bazar* portion.

Educational facilities.—There are four railway L. P. schools for the children of the railway employees teaching up to Class II only, out of which two teach through the Bengali medium and two through the Hindi medium. The total number on roll in these schools is 200.

Besides these institutions there is one Mahila Samity in Katihar railway colony with 75 members. It has been in existence for the last 25 years and is affiliated to the Saroj Nalini Nari Mangal Samity of Calcutta. It is run in a portion of the building of Rala Ram Railway Institute mentioned above. It is maintained by subscription and donation from the members and occasional grants from the railway revenue. It has a school with three teachers and 27 students teaching (1) Weaving, (2) Cutting, (3) Tailoring, (4) Embroidery, (5) Drawing, (6) Knitting and (7) Handicrafts.

PROHIBITION.

Prohibition has not been actually enforced in the district of Purnea, but since April, 1960 the sale hours of liquors have been reduced from 12 hours to 8 hours and the prices of the intoxicants have been raised in order to reduce their sale. But in spite of these steps there has been no diminution in their sale.

There has been no change in the hours of sale in *ganja, bhang* and toddy. Sale of opium has been restricted. Opium is sold only to people on medical certificates.

ADVANCEMENT OF BACKWARD CLASS AND TRIBES.

The population of the Adivasis, Harijans and other Backward Classes in the entire district based on the report of the 1951 census (page 124 to 131 of *District Census Handbook, Purnea,* published in 1956) were as follows:—

—	Population.	Percentage of total population.
Scheduled Castes	2,93,234	11.5
Scheduled Tribes	1,18,145	4.5
Other Backward Classes	6,64,661	26 2
Total ..	10,76,040	42·5

The overall total population of the district was 25,25,231.

They are distributed all over the district. Their distribution in the district revenue thanawise according to the *Census Report of* 1951 were as follows:—

—	Scheduled Castes.	Scheduled Tribes.	Other Backward Classes.
1. Araria Revenue *Thana* ...	21,666	1 228	50,830
2. Forbesganj Revenue *Thana* (excluding Forbesganj Town).	27,728	1,198	37,320
3. Raniganj Revenue *Thana* ..	23,156	1,700	24,730
4. Kishanganj Revenue *Thana* (excluding Kishanganj Town).	5,967	3,447	32,606
5. Bahadurganj Revenue *Thana* ..	9,823	5,030	21,326
6. Purnea Revenue *Thana* (excluding Purnea Town).	30,334	9,246	43,509

	Scheduled Castes.	Scheduled Tribes.	Other Backward Classes.
7. Amour Revenue *Thana* ..	5,279	1,315	59,387
8. Dhamdaha and Dharhara Police-Stations.	56,242	24,770	48,526
9. Rupauli Police-Station ..	11,642	3,350	25,249
10. Korha Revenue *Thana* ..	26,187	1,999	67,725
11. Gopalpur and Kadwa Revenue *Thanas*.	12,861	13,012	1,16,004
12. Katihar Revenue *Thana* (excluding Katihar Town).	30,743	30,460	52,351
13. Islampur Revenue *Thana* ..	6,692	11,273	67,247
Rural Total ..	2,68,320	1,08,028	6,46,810
14. All Towns of Purnea District ..	24,914	10,117	17,851

For the welfare of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other Backward Communities the State Government maintains the following staff in the district of Purnea:—

(1) District Welfare Officer of Gazetted Rank—1.

(2) Assistant District Welfare Officer of Non-Gazetted Rank—1.

(3) Welfare Inspectors—28.

Economic Welfare.

The Backward Classes being very poor had to procure seeds and money on credit at exorbitant rates of compound interest from village *mahajans*. These debts were realised at the time of harvesting, leaving very little for the poor people for future use. Thus poverty remained a permanent feature of their lives. To help them grain *golas* have been established which supply seeds at 25 per cent rate of interest for the first year and thereafter 6¼ per cent compound interest for each succeeding year. There are 26 such grain *golas* distributed all over the district.

During the Second Five Year Plan, agricultural subsidy of Rs. 52,860 was granted to Scheduled Castes, Rs. 4,350 to Scheduled Tribes and Rs. 4,972 to other Backward Classes. A sum of Rs. 16,237 was given out as agricultural subsidy to co-operative societies and individuals. These subsidies were meant for purchase of bullocks, manures and seeds.

Housing Scheme.

Construction of houses has been sanctioned at an estimated cost of Rs. 675 per house.

For Scheduled Castes the number of houses taken up is 499 of which 177 are under the State Plan and 322 are under the Central Plan. •263 houses are being built for Scheduled Tribes under the Centially sponsored scheme.

The accompanying chait shows the location of these schemes:—

Under State Plan for Scheduled Castes.

Year of construction.	Names of villages.	No. of houses.
1954-55 ...	Araria	8
1955-56 ...	Urlaha	6
	Khairkhan	9
	Bellouri	22
	Mathurapur	9
	Gokulpur	3
1958-59 ...	Bairagachi	30
1959 60 ...	Baghmara	22
	Bairagachi	15
	Bilaria	1
	Reziganj	11
	Belsara	14
	Balia	4
1960-61 ...	Daula	13
		167

Under the Centrally sponsored Scheme for Scheduled Castes.

Year of construction.	Names of villages.	No. of houses.
1956-57 ...	Akbarpur	10
	Dhokhwa	25
	Pipalgachi	16
	Machhatta	15
	Jankinagar	16
	Shrinagar Bellaria ...	22
	Singhia Dewangunj ...	1
	Morballa	4
	Basantpur	13
	Lakshmipur	22
	Kohbara Bishanpur ...	20
	Bareta	2
1957-58 ...	Bareta	4
	Belapemu	22
1958 59 ...	Belsara	25
	Ranipatra	1
	Majhwa	32
1959-60 ...	Matia	25
	Paikagola	3
	Singhia	20
	Bilaria	24
		322

Centrally sponsored Scheme for Scheduled Tribes

Year of construction.	Names of villages.	No. of houses.
1956-57 ...	Damaili	14
	Sarogara	24
1957-58 ...	Damaili	30
	Mira Mallick Sapha ...	11
	Ranipatra	3
	Maranga	37
1958-59 ...	Lakshmipur	4
	Ranipatra	1
	Chotka Rahika	19
	Dumar	13
	Maranga	65
1959-60 ...	Aga tola	14
	Abdulla Nagar	10
1960-61 ...	Kirantoli	18
		263

Educational Welfare.

Arrangements have been made to encourage education among the boys of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other Backward Communities by giving them stipends, exemption from school fees and distribution of book grants. Free hostel accommodation has been provided to some extent. According to the figures supplied by the District Education Officer, there were 12,745 males and 1,140 females belonging to the Scheduled Castes, 3,819 males and 467 females of Scheduled Tribes, 33,452 males and 23,140 females of other Backward Communities studying in 1959-60. Of these students 1,716 boys and 169 girls of the Scheduled Castes got scholarship amounting to a total of Rs. 1,20,713, 652 boys and 26 girls belonging to Scheduled Tribe got scholarship totalling Rs. 40,589, 836 boys and 147 girls belonging to Backward Muslim Community were awarded scholarship amounting to Rs. 23,760 and 1,558 boys and 148 girls of other Backward Communities enjoyed Rs. 73,939 as scholarship. In consideration of the large population belonging to these communities, it may be observed that education has still to make a headway among them and the subsidy has to be continued owing to their bad economy.

Hostels.

One hostel at Dhamdaha for Scheduled Tribes students and one at Purnea and another at Banmankhi for Scheduled Castes students are running in their own buildings constructed by the Welfare Department. Three hostels for Scheduled Tribes students, one at Barari, another at Burhia and the third at Katihar, and three hostels for Scheduled Castes, one at Katihar, another at Forbesganj and the third at Araria are being run in buildings taken on monthly rental by the Department. Buildings for one hostel for Scheduled Tribes at Kishanganj, two hostels for Scheduled Castes, one at Araria and the other at Manihari and one for other Backward Classes at Katihar are nearly complete and are expected to function very shortly.

As the number of students of these communities is not sufficient to fill all the seats, some 50 per cent of the accommodation has been made available temporarily to students belonging to other communities.

One junior basic type residential school for 25 Scheduled Castes students has been opened at Rampur and one at Forbesganj.

Besides these hostels students belonging to these communities are admitted into hostels, which are meant for other communities as well, at places where special Hostels have not been constructed for them. The total number of students belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other Backward Communities residing in hostels is 1,783 males and 11 females.

Medical and Public Health Welfare.

Medical aid.—Medical aid for treatment of incurable diseases was given in 1959-60 as follows:—

Rs. 2,100 were given to 52 persons belonging to Scheduled Castes, Rs. 900 were spent on medical aid on Adivasis, Rs. 1,260 were given to 27 persons belonging to other Backward Communities.

Medical centres.—Three medical centres for Adivasis specially have been opened, one at Marwa, the second at Kunwari Kothi and the third at Malinia. Each of them is under the charge of a *Vaidya.*

Water-supply.—A total of 217 wells for Scheduled Castes were sunk during the period 1955-56 to 1958-59 of which 93 are in Sadar subdivision, 29 in Kishanganj subdivision, 63 in Araria subdivision and 32 in Katihar subdivision

Similarly during this period Scheduled Tribes were provided with 109 wells of which 51 are in Sadar subdivision, 5 in Kishanganj subdivision, 14 in Araria subdivision and 39 in Katihar subdivision. Besides these, 720 tube-wells have been provided for Scheduled Castes and 67 for Scheduled Tribes.

Pathways and village roads.—In the year 1957-58, one wooden bridge on the Saraswati rivulet in Dhamdaha Police-Station and one metalled road from Kunwari Kothi to Bardiha in that police-station were constructed. This road has one brick-built culvert and four humepipe culverts. All of them are in a predominantly Adivasi area.

Institutions for welfare work.—The following institutions work for Adivasi welfare:—

(1) Sarvodaya Ashram, Ranipatra.

(2) Adivasi Vikas Samity, Dhamda a.

(3) Thana Adivasi Samity, Dharhara.

(4) Congress Seva Samity, Barari.

(5) Gokul Krishna Ashram, Purnea.

(6) Thana Adivasi Samity, Katihar.

The following institutions work for Harijan welfare:—

(1) Sarvodaya Ashram, Ranipatra.

(2) Harijan Vikas Samity, Dhamdaha.

(3) Harijan Kalyan Samity, Banmankhi.

(4) Harijan Seva Samity, Dhamdaha.

(5) Harijan Seva Sangh, Barihat, Khazanchihat.

(6) Harijan Seva Samity, Dharhara.

All these institutions receive help from the State.

CHARITABLE ENDOWMENTS.

Public trusts and endowments made by the Hindus in Purnea district are governed by the Bihar Hindu Religious Trust Act I of 1950. The State Government have appointed a Special Officer with his headquarters at Patna to administer the Act.

The Act imposes a duty on the trustees of a public trust to make an application for the registration of the trust giving specific particulars. The trustees should mention in the application the approximate value of movable and immovable properties belonging to the trust, and the average annual income and expenditure. No registration is, however, essential for trusts owned privately. From the registered trust the Board realises a fee at the rate of 5 per cent on the income of the trust property.

Charitable endowment may be classed under two categories, viz., (1) those created for public purposes and placed under the management of Government officials, and (2) religious and public trusts placed in charge of trustees, such as, *Motwallis* in *Waqf* estates of Muslims and *Sevayats* in religious trust of Hindus and other communities. The three charitable endowments existing in this district are detailed below:—

Mirza Md. Husain's Endowment Trust, Purnea.—Mirza Md. Husain, a *zamindar*. of the town (Purnea City), founded (1) a *Sarai* (inn) for the reception of travellers and (2) an English Middle School for the dessimination of English education in the town of Purnea. He applied to the Commissioner of the Bhagalpur Division on the 3rd May, 1866 for permission to make over the management of the institution to Government. The Government of Bengal in letter no. 2050-T., dated the 8th September, 1866, to the address of the Secretary to Board of Revenue accepted the offer made by the Mirza and in its letter no. 4192, dated the 17th December, 1868, approved the arrangements sanctioned by the

Board of Revenue for the management of the two institutions. The *Sarai* (inn) was placed in charge of the Magistrate and Collector and the school under the District Committee of Public Instruction. Since this Committee ceased to exist, the Collector has managed the school which is liable to inspection by the officers of the Education Department. The endowment consists of Rs. 9,800 in Government promissory notes and of the landed property which yielded a gross annual rental of Rs. 1,112 of which Rs 460 is paid on account of Government revenues and Rs. 196 in cesses, besides management, rates and collection charges.

The landed property consisted of—

	Rs.
(1) Tengri—Tauzi no. 253 under direct management yielding.	318
(2) Pirganj Bairbana—Tauzi no. 253 let out in Patni yielding.	'369
(3) Gokulpur Ghansyam—Tauzi no. 1409 and 8 anna share of Bhithouli Khemchand—Tauzi no 1675 let out in *Patniat Jama* of.	425
Total	1,112

The Collector of Purnea is the administrator of the Trust.

The Sarai.—The *Sarai* is brick-built and has 11 well-ventilated rooms each capable of accommodating two persons. There are one mosque, one well and four latrines within the compound of the *Sarai* The *Sarai* is out of use and it is at present in a delapidated condition though repairs were carried out in 1940 at a cost of Rs. 330 and in 1951 at a cost of Rs. 1,000 out of the Trust Fund.

The M. E. School.—The school is named Purnea City Middle English School. There are seven teachers including the Headmaster and one peon. It has got a *pucca* building consisting of 8 rooms including Headmaster's office room. There are about 200 students in this school. The school gets Rs. 54 monthly in addition to the cost of additional furniture and repairs out of the Trust Fund. The taxes

are also borne by Government. The school is well equipped.

Raja P. C. Lall Trust Fund.—It was created by Raja P. C. Lall Choudhury of Purnea City under a registered deed executed by him in the year 1942. The trust properties consist of two *mahals* named Sarna Bari and Patni Jalalpur bearing an annual income of about Rs. 7,804. Annual contributions of Rs. 2,000 for the maintenance of Dharanchan Surgical Ward with four beds in Sadar Hospital, Purnea, Rs. 1,500 towards maintenance of Zanana Ward with 10 beds in Sadar Hospital, Purnea and Rs. 1,200 for maintenance of Purnea City Dispensary and outdoor dispensary, are made out of the Trust Fund.

There is also provision for the award of a scholarship of Rs. 8 per month tenable for two years to the best student of the Zila School on the result of the Matriculation Examination every year, and a Gold Medal worth Rs. 60 to be awarded to the best student of the said school in order of merit. Prior to the introduction of Land Reforms, the above functions of the trust used to be carried out from the Fund derived from the income of the above estates. The entire trust properties have now vested in the State of Bihar. In the post-Land Reforms period the functions of the Trust are being managed from the amount received as *ad-interim* annuity sanctioned for the properties vested in the State of Bihar.

From a statement maintained in the Collector's Office, it appears that there are 89 more Trusts. In some cases the required documents have not yet been filed by the *Sebait* or the Trustee, while in other cases payments have not been made after 1958.

The Mahila Samiti of Purnea was established in 1925 and has been the premier body for bringing the women of Purnea town together for social work. Since 1948 this association has done a lot of useful work to solve the problem of the displaced persons. A school for the children of the displaced persons was started which has now received a permanent status. The Samiti has its own building and organises cultural shows from time to time and works out an integrated social programme for the uplift of the needy women which covers schooling, cottage industries, needle-work, spinning, weaving and knitting.

CHAPTER XVII.

PUBLIC LIFE AND VOLUNTARY SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANISATIONS.

The First General Election was held in the year 1952 after achievement of Independence in 1947. This was held on the basis of adult franchise.

About 19.75 per cent of the total population exercised their right of franchise The election provided equal opportunity to all. This was the first experiment of an election where there was no restriction on women or members of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes

In the General Election of 1952 out of the total population of 25,25,231 (1951 census) in the district 11,72,803 were eligible for franchise out of which 7,78,242 were males while 4,24,561 females, i.e., 46.44 per cent of the total population was eligible for franchise.

Lok Sabha Election, 1952.

There were two constituencies, Purnea North-East and Purnea Central for the purpose of the Lok Sabha (House of the People). Portions of Santhal Parganas in the same Bhagalpur Division were joined with Purnea. This was called Purnea-*cum*-Santhal Parganas Constituency The Commissioner of the Bhagalpur Division was the Returning Officer

Portions of Purnea were joined with Bhagalpur and one such constituency was joined known as Bhagalpur-*cum*-Purnea Constituency. The Returning Officer of this Constituency was the Commissioner of the Bhagalpur Division.

The results of the 1952 Elections for these four Parliament (Lok Sabha) Constituencies were as follows:—

Name of constituency.	No. of seats.	No. of electors.	Total no. of votes.	Total no. of valid votes polled.	Percentage.
1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Purnea-*cum*-Santhal Parganas.	2	7,52,822	15,05,644	6,59,217	43·78
2. Bhagalpur-*cum*-Purnea	2	6,40,994	12,81,988	5,12,765	40·00
3. Purnea North East	1	3,69,596	3,69,596	1,20,467	32·59
4. Purnea Central	1	3,57,038	3,57,038	1 38,412	38·77

For six seats there were 17 contesting candidates who had the party label of the Indian National Congress, Socialists, Jharkhand and some were Independents. The Indian National Congress was the largest political party which had won the majority in the previous election and their party had formed the Cabinet. The Socialists may briefly be described as seceders from the Indian National Congress on ideological differences. Both these parties had their affiliations beyond the State. The Jharkhand party had been formed in this State with the object of forming a separate State with all the tribal areas. The Indian National Congress contested all the six Parliamentary seats, Socialists five, Jharkhand two and four Independents.

The Indian National Congress captured four Parliamentary seats while Jharkhand and Socialist each captured one seat. The analysis of valid polled votes was as follows:—

Party.			No. of valid votes polled.
Congress	..	..	7,66,001
Socialist	..	..	3,14,716
Jharkhand	..	..	2,69,085
Independent	..	..	81,059
	Total	..	14,30,861

The Indian National Congress as a party fared better in the Parliamentary election than all the other parties in field. But it could poll 53.62 per cent of the total votes as against 46.38 per cent of the votes captured by the other parties.

VIDHAN SABHA ELECTION, 1952.

For the Vidhan Sabha (Legislative Assembly) there were 17 constituencies consisting of 20 seats in the district. The results of the 1952 elections for the Vidhan Sabha (Legislative Assembly) for these 17 constituencies were as follows:—

Name of constituency.	No. of seats.	No. of electors.	Total no. of votes.	Total no. of valid votes polled.	Percentage.
1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Narpatganj-*cum*-Dharhara.	2	1,32,550	2,65,100	86,538	32·62
2. Dhamdaha-*cum*-Korha.	2	1,00,948	2,01,896	87,744	43·46
3. Rupauli ...	1	41,685	41,685	19,747	47·38

Name of constituency.	No. of seats.	No. of electors.	Total no. of votes.	Total no. of valid votes polled	Percentage.
1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Thakurganj ...	1	63,780	63,780	21,367	33·50
5. Islampur ...	1	69,117	69,117	18,850	27·27
6. Kishanganj ..	1	66,327	66,327	22,481	33·89
7. Bahadurganj ...	1	67,140	67 140	20,647	30·75
8. Karandighi ...	1	53,280	53,280	17,424	32·70
9. Kadwa ...	1	49,952	49,952	19,004	38·04
10. Forbesganj ..	1	60,864	60,864	25,625	42 10
11. Palasi ...	1	65,095	65,095	18,756	28·81
12. Araria ...	1	68,425	68,425	27,430	40·09
13 Amaur ...	1	57,956	57,956	Uncontested	Uncontested
14. Baisi ...	1	54,194	54,194	23,394	43 17
15. Purnea ...	1	50,504	50,504	24,007	47·53
16. Katihar *cum*-Barari.	2	1,10,207	1,10,207	42,941	38·96
17. Azamnagar ...	1	60,779	60,779	22,778	37·48

For the 20 Vidhan Sabha seats in the 17 constituencies 79 candidates affiliated to different Political Parties were as follows:—

Party.	No. of candidates.
Indian National Congress	20
Socialist Party	17
Praja Party	7
Jan Sangh	4
Communists	2
Independents	29

The analysis of the valid polled votes was as follows:—

Indian National Congress	2,84,561
Socialist Party	1,20,145
Praja Party	15,928
Jan Sangh	13,647
Communists	6,047
Independent	1,01,346

The total votes polled by the Congress Party was 2,84,561 as against 2,57,113 polled by the other parties.

The analysis indicates the organisational strength of the Indian National Congress as a Political Party. The fact that so many Independents contested but only one succeeded underlines the importance of party system. The Independents, however, among themselves had been able to capture a big percentage of the votes cast. In this we find a relative weakness in the bigger parties.

Only three women contested for the Assembly seats out of whom, one was elected as a member of the Vidhan Sabha as a Congress Candidate from Azamnagar Constituency.

Details regarding the three women candidates are as follows:—

Name of the candidate/ Party.	Name of the constituency.	No. of total votes polled.	No. of votes polled by the candidate.	Percentage.
Srimati Parbati Devi—Congress.	Azamnagar	22,778	13,048	57.28
Srimati Shanti Lata—Praja.	Katihar-*cum*-Barauni.	42,941	2,034	4.74
Srimati Pushpa Sinha—Socialist.	Karandighi	17,424	659	3.78

This analysis rather indicates that women candidates as such did not mean much. The party label of the candidate was the ruling factor.

Report on the First General Election under the Constitution of India in Bihar 1951-52 mentions about the methods adopted for the election as follows:—

"The methods of canvassing were the usual ones, namely, personal contact, distribution of leaflets and public meetings. Appeals to caste feelings were not uncommon."

THE SECOND GENERAL ELECTION, 1957.

The Second General Election was held in the year 1957 on the basis of the electoral rolls prepared during the First General Election in 1952 with modifications therein in course of five years.

Lok Sabha Election, 1957.

So far as Lok Sabha constituencies were concerned there were in all three constituencies consisting of three seats in the district.

The details of the elections in the Parliamentary constituencies are given below·—

Names of the constituencies.	No. of seats.	No. of electors.	No. of votes	Total number of valid votes	Percentage.
1. Kishanganj	1	3,88,648	3,88,648	1,43,932	37.03
2. Purnea ...	1	3,94,634	3,94,634	1,72,657	43.75
3. Katihar ...	1	3,76,760	3,76,760	1,51,010	40.08

For the Parliamentary seats 4,67,599 or about 40 per cent valid votes were cast. For the three Parliamentary seats, there were in all 11 contesting candidates—three from the Congress Party, three from P. S. P., one from Communist and four were Independents The Indian National Congress Party captured all the three Parliamentary seats. Out of the total cast valid votes, Congress secured 2,36,733 votes, P. S. P. 95,823, Communist 13,547 and 1,21,496 by the Independents.

On the basis of above, it is evident that Congress fared better than all the opposite parties combined together as the former secured 2,36,733 votes as against 2,30,866 by the latter. The Indian National Congress as a party had a better organisation.

Vidhan Sabha Election, 1957.

There were in all 15 constituencies consisting of 18 seats for, which there were 72 contesting candidates in the field out of which Indian National Congress and Praja Socialist Party each contested for all the 18 seats, Janta 7 seats, Communist 4, Jan Sangh 2 and 23 Independents.

Out of the 18 seats, 16 were captured by the Congress, one by the Praja Socialist Party and the remaining one by an Independent candidate. Only two women candidates both nominated by the Indian National Congress fought the election and were elected as the members of the Legislative Assembly from Palassy and Manihari constituencies

Details of the election of both the women candidates are given below:—

Name of the candidate/Party.	Name of the constituency.	Number of total votes polled.	No. of votes polled by the candidate.	Percentage.
Shrimati Shanti Devi—Congress.	Palassy	26,298	10,128	45.42
Shrimati Parbati Devi—Congress.	Manihari	22,885	8,824	38·56

Both the women candidates had to face a very stiff contest as the leading opponents polled 8,827 and 8,689 votes respectively Both the leading opponents belonged to Praja Socialist Party

The details of the elections of all the constituencies are given below.—

Names of the constituencies.	Number of seats.	Number of electors.	Number of votes.	Number of valid votes polled.	Percentage
1. Raniganj ..	1	55,960	55,960	21,383	38·21
2. Forbesganj	2	1,19,573	2,39,146	99,571	41·63
3. Araria ...	1	61,688	61,688	26,081	42·28

Names of the constituencies.	Number of seats.	Number of electors.	Number of votes.	Number of valid votes polled.	Percentage.
4. Palassy ...	1	73,035	73,035	26,298	36·00
5. Bahadur-ganj.	1	66,330	66,330	21,165	31·90
6. Kishanganj	1	68,022	68,022	19,836	29·16
7. Amour ...	1	75,290	75,290	40,103	53·26
8. Purnea ...	1	77,347	77,347	36,777	47·55
9. Dhamdaha	2	1,18,818	2,37,636	94,825	39·90
10. Rupauli ...	1	67,219	67,219	26,323	39·16
11. Barari ...	1	75,581	75,581	31,182	41·26
12. Manihari...	1	53,359	53,359	22,885	42·90
13. Katihar ...	2	1,16,872	2,33,744	85,676	36·65
14. Kadwa ...	1	64,355	64,355	22,487	34·94
15. Baisea ...	1	66,593	66,593	30,980	46·52

Out of the total votes of 15,15,305 in Purnea district 6,05,572 or about 41 per cent valid votes were cast. The Congress Party secured 3,04,986 as against 3,00,586 of the combined votes secured by the Praja Socialist Party, the Janta Party, the Jan Sangh, Communist and the Independents.

Out of the 72 contesting candidates for the Legislative Assembly, as many as 31 candidates forfeited their deposits for having polled less than the required percentage of votes cast.

There was only one election petition filed from Manihari Constituency challenging the validity of the election of a woman Congress candidate who had been declared elected. But the election petition was dismissed.

A detailed list of the votes secured by different parties is given below:—

Congress	3,04,986
P. S. P.	1,11,619
Communist ..	11,470
Jan Sangh	14,650
Janta	35,680
Independents	1,27,167

PROPOSED CHANGES IN THE CONSTITUENCIES.

A proposal has been mooted by the Chief Electoral Officer in his letter no. C.-1-101/60-Elec.—778, dated the 6th March, 1961, to split up the existing two-member Parliamentary and Assembly Constituencies. The existing Forbesganj, Dhamdaha and Katihar Double-Member Constituencies will be split up into six constituencies as per following statement:—

Name of double-member constituency.	Extent of constituency.	Name of proposed constituency now bifurcated.	Extent of constituency.
1. Forbesganj.	Forbesganj, Narpatganj and Sikti Police Stations of Araria subdivision.	(1) Forbesganj.	(1) Forbesganj P.-S. (excluding Chaukidari Unions nos. 1 to 3, 9 and 10) and Sikti P.-S. of Araria subdivision.
		(2) Narpatganj.	(2) Narpatganj P.-S. and Chaukidari Unions nos. 1 to 3, 9 and 10 in Forbesganj P.-S. in Araria subdivision.
2. Dhamdaha.	Dharhara P.-S. and Dhamdaha P.-S. (excluding Chaukidari Unions nos. 16 and 17) and Chaukidari Unions 1 to 6 in Purnea (Sadar) P.-S. in Purnea Sadar subdivision.	(1) Dhamdaha.	(1) Dhamdaha P.-S. (excluding Chaukidari Unions nos. 16 and 17) in Purnea Sadar subdivision
		(2) Dharhara.	(2) Dharhara P.-S. and Chaukidari Unions nos 1 to 6 in Purnea P.-S. in Purnea subdivision.

Name of double member constituency.	Extent of constituency.	Name of proposed constituency now bifurcated	Extent of constituency
3. Katihar.	Katihar P.-S. and Azamnagar P.-S. (excluding Chaukidari Unions nos. 2 and 4) and Chaukidari Unions nos. 3 to 6 and 11 to 13 in Korha P.-S in Katihar subdivision	(1) Katihar.	(1) Katihar P.-S. (excluding Chaukidari Unions nos. 2 to 4, 7 to 10 and 12 to 14) and Chaukidari Unions nos. 3 to 6 and 11 to 13 in Korha P.-S in Katihar subdivision.
		(2) Azamnagar.	(2) Azamnagar P.-S. (excluding Chaukidari Unions nos. 2 and 4) and 2 to 4, 7 to 10 and 12 to 14 in Katihar P. S. of Katihar subdivision.

NEWSPAPERS

No daily newspapers are published in the district Only one weekly Hindi periodical *Yugbani* is published from Purnea and has a small local circulation There were a few other weekly Hindi papers like *Samaj Kalyan* and *Kurukhetra*

The daily English newspapers published outside the district and in common circulation are *Indian Nation, Searchlight* of Patna The Calcutta papers that are in common circulation are the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, the *Statesman*, the *Hindusthan Standard* and the *Times of India* Among the English weeklies and periodicals that have some circulations mention may be made of *Blitz* of Bombay, *Illustrated Weekly of India* of Bombay and *Shankar's Weekly* of Delhi. The *Modern Review, Careers and Courses* have some circulation. No authentic circulation figures are available but it was gathered that about fifteen hundred copies have a sale throughout the district. Considering the number of English educated people this figure has to be considered as poor.

Among the Hindi daily newspapers *Aryavarta, Pradeep, Viswamitra* of Patna have a good circulation. Among the weekly Hindi periodicals *Dharmyug* (Bombay) and *Navshakti* of Patna

have also a good circulation. The two Bengali dailies of Calcutta *Ananda Bazar Patrika* and *Yugantar* have a good circulation.

Among the Urdu dailies *Seyasat-e-Jadid,* Kanpur and *Sada-e-Am* of Patna are popular.

Similar difficulties were felt in concluding any correct figure of circulation of the language papers. It may be near about 3,000. The total number of language papers read will not be very high in comparison to the incidence of education. For this purpose it may be taken that each paper, that is sold, is read by about four persons on the average.

VOLUNTARY SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANISATIONS.

The Voluntary Social Service Organisations of local importance are a branch of Bharat Sewak Samaj, a branch of Bharat Scouts and Guide, Yateem Khana, Hardayal Hindu Anathalaya, Purnea District Sports Association, Ram Krishna Mission Ashram, Sarvodaya Ashram, Adivasi Sewa Samiti and Harijan Sewak Samiti.

Bharat Sewak Samaj.—The Bharat Sewak Samaj was organised as a district branch in Purnea in 1955. The programme of the *Samaj* is to function with its branches at all the blocks, *Anchals, thana,* subdivision and even in villages. It has an office at Katihar and operates through its following wings:—

(1) Information Centre, (2) Anti-Corruption Centre, (3) Mahila Section, (4) Youth and Camp Section.

There are several committees consisting of officials and non-officials to implement the various items in the programme of the organisation. Some of the official members are the representatives of the District Magistrate, District Agricultural Officers, District Animal Husbandry Officer, Assistant Registrars of Co-operative Societies and District Welfare Officer. These officers help the organisation by issuing instructions to their subordinates to help the Bharat Sewak Samaj in implementing its scheme.

Village uplift work consists of sanitation and public works. Public works schemes cover construction and maintenance of village paths, wells, pynes, etc., with the voluntary labour of its members. In the urban areas the *Samaj* has also taken up the work of removing corruption from offices.

The Bharat Sewak Samaj has started a night shelter at Katihar where poor labourers including other people come and take rest in the night for which they have to pay one anna per person per night.

Bharat Scouts and Guide.—This is an all-India organisation with headquarters at Patna. Purnea has a branch. This branch trains its members, both boys and girls in volunteer service. The services of the scouts are taken on occasions like public functions, *melas*, etc.

Yateem Khana.—This is an orphanage for Muslims at Katihar. This institution was established in 1924 for the maintenance of the Muslim orphan boys and girls up to a period of 15 years where they were to be trained in some craft. This orphanage at present maintains 110 boys and 40 girls. This is a registered institution and four mistresses and four teachers have been appointed to impart training to boys and girls. There is an Executive Committee. It receives grant of a sum of Rs. 45 per annum only from the municipality and contributions from the public.

Hardayal Hindu Anathalaya.—There is one orphanage at Katihar for Hindu boys and girls, known as Hardayal Hindu Anathalaya. This institution was established in 1933 for the maintenance of Hindu orphan boys and girls up to 18 years including widows. This orphanage is a registered one and receives grant from Social Welfare Board of a sum of Rs. 600 annually. It maintains at present three boys, three girls and three widows. One *dai* has been appointed permanently. When the number of the boys, girls or widows is increased they appoint temporarily teachers and mistresses. This institution has a Managing Committee. Each member of the Committee has to pay Rs. 3 annually as contribution. There are also contributions from the public.

Purnea District Sports Association.—This Association was organised in 1945 and is affiliated to the Bihar State Sports Association. It has a working committee where the District Magistrate, Purnea, is the Chairman It receives some Government aid from Bihar Sports Fund and also from the Discretionary Fund of the District Magistrate, Purnea. The main work of this Association is to give affiliation to sporting clubs and teams of the district. It runs several trophies for different games. The Association has done good work in the field of physical education.

Ram Krishna Mission Ashram.—The Ram Krishna Mission Ashram was organised in 1923 at Katihar and was affiliated in 1932. From a very small beginning the Ram Krishna Ashram has gradually developed into a big institution with various philanthropic, educational and cultural activities. The *Ashram* runs a charitable outdoor dispensary with Homeopathic and

Allopathic departments, Secondary High school, library and reading room, students' home, and occasional relief work, etc. It receives grant from the Centre and State Governments and other local bodies of Purnea. Besides, it also gets help from the people of Purnea by means of donations and contributions.

The Homoeopathic department is conducted by a qualified doctor and compounder. Free medical aid and medicines are given to patients irrespective of caste, creed and colour. The Allopathic department is conducted by a qualified doctor and a compounder.

As regards Secondary High school it may be mentioned that the Ram Krishna Vidyamandir was started in 1951 mainly for the displaced children from East Pakistan. About 662 boys and 153 girls read in this school.

On every Sunday the students collect rice (*Mushti Bhiksha*) from door to door with a view to help the poor students with school fees and needy families.

The library is utilised by the students. The library contains a total number of 3,000 books in English, Bengali, Hindi and in Sanskrit on religion, philosophy and literature.

In students' home there are twelve students of whom three are full free, three half free and six are paying.

The *Ashram* distributes liquid powdered milk among school children.

The branches at Katihar and Araria are affiliated to the Head Office of the Ram Krishna Mission at Belur near Calcutta. The Araria branch has got good *pucca* buildings and a big orchard. There is a temple and a charitable Homeopathic dispensary.

The Purnea branch is not affiliated to the Head Office of the Ram Krishna Mission but is managed by a committee of the local public. There is a Homoeopathic charitable dispensary, a free library and a reading room. It has its own buildings constructed by donations from the public. The Durga Puja here is very popular.

Sarvodaya Ashram.—This organisation was established at Ranipatra on the 21st June, 1952. This is a registered organisation. Through *Bhoodan* and *Gram Dan,* this organisation aims to spread ideas of village uplift. The organisation is controlled by a District Sarvodaya Mandal consisting of eleven members.

The organisation has propagated *Charkha* for establishment of *khadi* and village industries and established a number of night centres for adult education and primary schools and training-*cum*-production centre for Adivasi and Harijan students. The organisation is financed by the State Government through its several departments.

Adivasi Seva Samiti.—This organisation was started in 1957 at Katihar, but it is still unregistered. It is functioning with the help of a committee consisting of President, Secretary and twelve members. The organisation is given an annual grant from Welfare Department, Government of Bihar, Patna. The organisation is running night centres for adult education and primary school for Adivasi children.

Harijan Seva Samiti.—For the welfare of the Harijans the following institutions have been started but all are unregistered institutions. They are Harijan Vikas Samiti at Dhamdaha, Harijan Kalyan Samiti at Banmankhi, Barihat, Khajanchihat, Dharhara. They are exclusively associated with the work of ameliorating the condition of the Harijans. An attempt is made to give them a better start in life and to introduce handicrafts for improving the economic condition. All these institutions receive help from the State.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PLACES OF INTEREST.

Araria.—A village situated on the left bank of the Panar, 30 miles north of Purnea, which has given its name to the north-western subdivision of the district. The village seems to have been in good prosperous condition in the time of Francis Buchanan. As he had mentioned, "Arariya for the country is rather a good town, its principal street being somewhat straight and close built, and in some places so wide that two carts can pass. It is also adorned with two or three flower gardens, a luxury that in this part is very rare It contains about 250 houses. No other place in the division can be called a town."* The number of houses and population seems to have risen to 311 and 1,498 respectively during Hunter's time. Regarding the village Hunter had mentioned as follows:—

> "It formerly contained a Munsif's court and a police-station and also gave its name to the criminal court subsequently established in the village of Turkeli These offices together with a lock-up and excise stores, have now been removed to Basantpur, on the right bank of the Panar."

Basantpur where now the offices of the subdivision are located, is four miles west of Araria, but the place is commonly called Araria.

Araria subdivision was formed on the 1st November, 1864. So the Munsif's court and the police-station might have been established in 1864 or in the beginning of 1865. The head-quarters were shifted to Basantpur, the present site in 1875.

It has the court of the Subdivisional Officer, Second Officer and the office of the Deputy Collector incharge of Land Revenue and Developments. There are also the courts of a Judicial Magistrate and two Munsifs to try criminal and civil cases. Besides development offices such as the offices of the S. D. O., P. W. D., the Subdivisional Agriculture Officer, etc., are located here. The Araria Block is now located near the Araria court station in a rented building, the block building is under construction. It contains two High schools, one for boys and the other

**An Account of the District of Purniah in 1809-10*; p. 77.

for girls, a girls' Middle school, post and telegraph office, police-station, subdivisional hospital, a sub-jail and a library. The Araria Court railway station is about two miles west from here.

Its population (Basantpur) in 1951 census was 9,607 containing in 2,419 houses. The sanitation of the market is now controlled by a Union Board. There is a proposal to constitute a Notified Area Committee for Araria. Araria has a mixed population in which cultivators and landless labourers predominate. In the small market of Araria the commodities for necessity for life can be procured. Weekly *hats* are held on Wednesdays and Saturdays where agricultural commodities are purchased and sold.

Araria Subdivision —North-western subdivision of the district extending over an area of 991 square miles according to the census of 1951. The subdivision is bounded on the north by Nepal and Saharsa district; on the east by thana Bahadurganj in the Kishanganj subdivision; on the south by thanas Amour, Banmankhi and Kasba of the Sadar subdivision and on the west by Saharsa district.

Regarding the topography and river system the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* mentions as follows:—

> "It is an alluvial tract of flat country with occasional swamps and stretches of high ground. The soil is generally sandy, but the portion lying to the north and east of the Panar is rich in alluvial deposits and is more fertile. The western half of the subdivision has been overlaid with a thick deposit of sand in the course of the westward march of the ever-shifting Kosi. There is also a long belt of fairly high prairie-like ground, which extends throughout the entire length of the subdivision southwards as far as Purnea and constitutes the principal grazing ground of the subdivision.

> "The rivers of the subdivision may be grouped into two systems, the Kosi group, including the Kosi and its several branches, and the Panar group. The former drains the extreme west, and the latter the north and east of the subdivision. The principal rivers of the Kosi group are the Pheriani, Latchha and Hiran, all subsidiary branches or channels of the Kosi river, and the Kamla and Saura rivers. The three former carry a considerable portion of

the waters of the Kosi during the rains, and at that season are transformed into rapid streams, which sometimes inundate almost the whole country west of Raniganj up to the main channel of the Kosi. The main bed of the Kosi lies to the extreme west of the subdivision, but the channels of deep water constantly change, new ones being opened up and old ones choked by sand banks. The Kamla is a swampy sluggish stream, which flows southward into thana Purnea, where it is joined by the Saura, the combined river emptying itself into the Ganges opposite Sakrigali. The Saura is a marshy stream, narrow but difficult to cross, which rises in the neighbourhood of Hingna and Kadwa and flows southward into thana Purnea. It merges in the Kamla south of the town of Purnea.

"To the east the river system consists of the Parwan or Panar, the Bakra and the Katua The Parwan is a deep tortuous hill stream rising in the Nepal Tarai It pursues a south and south-easterly course through thana Forbesganj and passing east of Basantpur, continues a circuitous course through thana Araria into thana Purnea. It ultimately empties itself into the Ganges The Bakra is a small and very rapid stream, troublesome and shifting. It rises in Nepal and flows in a southerly direction, passing between the two thanas of Forbesganj and Araria. It formerly joined the Parwan or Panar river near Chandarni, but has recently taken a different course, and instead of emptying itself into the Parwan at Chandarni, follows an old channel (*mara dhar*) known as the Hatkuli, and joins the Katua river near Matiari in thana Araria. The Panar is also shifting its course and gradually moving westwards, thus threatening the present headquarters station. The Katua river has its origin in the Tarai, flows in a southerly direction through thana Araria, and passes out into thana Amur Kasba."

To this may be added that due to the great Earthquake of Bihar in 1934 there occurred some changes in the topography of the subdivision. The great part of the western half of the subdivision, which had been overlaid with thick deposits of sand due to the ever-shifting Kosi, is brought under cultivation. The

arid Araria plains which extend from Raniganj in the west to Jalalgarh in the east in the south border of the Sadar subdivision have come under afforestation scheme. Till 1959 about 2,178 acres of lands have been afforestated. The species planted are mostly *semal, sisham* and bamboos which are indigenous to the place as well as teak, *kaju* and casurina. In these species bamboos and *semal* are the best. The Kosi canal which is under construction will pass through this arid belt and with irrigation facilities the arid land will be converted into fertile land.

The subdivision is divided into three revenue thanas, viz., (1) Araria, with three police-stations, i.e., Araria, Palasi and Sikti, (2) Forbesganj with two, i.e., Forbesganj and Narpatganj and (3) Raniganj which is both thana and police-station.

The Subdivisional Officer, Araria is the head of the administration and in this he is assisted by a Deputy Magistrate. In revenue matter he is assisted by a Deputy Collector in charge of the land revenue and development. The criminal and civil cases are tried by the Judicial Magistrate and the Munsif respectively who are under the District and Sessions Judge, Purnea.

For development and revenue purposes the subdivision is further divided into nine *anchals*, viz., Araria, Raniganj, Bhargama, Narpatganj, Forbesganj, Kurskanta, Sikti, Jorhat and Palasi; out of these the first six are now converted into blocks The block is under the Block Development Officer and the *anchal* is under the Circle Officer.

A colony of the Kosi Project has been set up at Bathnaha. The Canal Circle no. I is at Bathnaha which is under the Superintending Engineer, Canal Circle. In this circle there are two canal divisions, Canal Divisions IV and V; the headquarters of the Executive Engineers of both these divisions are at Bathnaha

The total population of the subdivision in 1951 was 5,37,000 consisting of 2,80,016 males and 2,57,584 females as against 5,39,530 in 1941, the density being 542 per square mile in 1951. It contains 900 villages, at one of which Basantpur, the headquarters are situated. The subdivision has only one town, i.e., Forbesganj and the principal marts are Araria, Raniganj, Jogbani and Narpatganj.

The chief occupation of the subdivision is cultivation and jute is the main cash crop. The communication on the whole is not satisfactory. On the north metalled road connects Forbesganj and Jogbani with Araria, Purnea and Katihar.

Narpatganj has been connected with Forbesganj by a metalled road and a *pucca* road has been constructed from

Bathnaha to Birpur in Saharsa district. There are no metalled roads in the east and west of the subdivision. In the rainy season communication usually becomes all the more difficult. The chief conveyance of this part is bullock-cart, horses and ponies.

According to the 1951 census the population of this place is only 695 (400 males and 295 females). There are 202 literate males and 85 females in this village.

In the *District Census Handbook of Purnea,* 1951, this place is mentioned as Asurgarh Milik. It is under the jurisdiction of Kishanganj police-station and its thana no. is 241. It has an area of 67 acres and covers 138 houses.

Baghnagar.—A small village to the south-east of Araria town. Some old coins have been found recently below the earth in a cave the bricks of which seem to be very old. It is understood that investigations are being made regarding the identity and time of those bricks.

Baldiabari.—A village situated about a mile and a half from Nawabganj in the south of the district. This village was the site of the battle between Shaukat Jang and Siraj-ud-daula in 1756

It grows canes extensively and a quantity is sent out. Baldiabari has now become a *tola* of the village Manihari. Its total population is 600 (321 males and 279 females). There are 125 number of houses and its total area is only 32 acres.

Banaili Raj.—The last *District Gazetteer of Purnea,* 1911 by Mr. L. S S. O'Malley mentions as follows:—

> "A large estate situated in Purnea, Malda, Monghyr and Bhagalpur. The founder of the family which now owns the estate was Hazari Choudhri, who about 1780 A. D. acquired by purchase *pargana* Tirakharda in this district. His son, Raja Dular Singh Bahadur, acquired estates in Bhagalpur Monghyr and Malda about the year 1800 and left two sons, Raja Bidyanand Singh and Kumar Rudranand Singh. There was litigation between them, which resulted in the division of the properties then held by the family into two equal parts. One part was given to Raja Bidyanand Singh and the other to Kumar Rudranand Singh, grandfather of the Srinagar Kumars. Subsequent to the partition between Raja Bidyanand Singh and his brother, the former purchased Mahalat Kharagpur,

an extensive property in Monghyr. Raja Bidyanand Singh Bahadur died in 1851, and was succeeded by his son Raja Lilanand Singh Bahadur, who also added to the estate by purchasing Chandpur Husain and *taluk* Khajuria in 1860. He died in 1883, and left three sons, Raja Padmanand Singh Bahadur, Kumar Kalanand Singh and Kumar Krityanand Singh (a posthumous son). In the year 1888 a suit was instituted on behalf of the two minor sons, Kalanand Singh and Krityanand Singh, through their mother Rani Sitabati, in the court of the District Judge of Bhagalpur. This ended in a compromise decree, under which the two minor sons were to be owners of a nine anna share of the property, while Raja Padmanand Singh Bahadur retained the remaining seven annas

"In 1903 Kumar Chandranand Singh, son of Raja Padmanand Singh Bahadur, brought a suit against his father for partition, which also ended in a compromise decree, the son being declared to be owner of a 3½ anna share, and Raja Padmanand Singh Bahadur of the remaining 3½ anna share

Subsequently however, in September, 1905, Raja Padmanand Singh transferred to his son his rights and interest in his share, so that the present (1908) owners of the Banaili Raj are Kumars Kalanand Singh and Krityanand Singh, to the extent of nine annas, and Kumar Chandranand Singh, to the extent of seven annas. The Collector of Bhagalpur, having been appointed receiver for the seven annas share by the District Judge of Bhagalpur, has given a lease of it to Kumars Kalanand Singh and Krityanand Singh for 12 years (from 1312 to 1323 F. S.) so that the latter are now (1908), in possession of the entire estate. The seven annas share is involved in debt to the extent of about 50 lakhs of rupees, Kumars Kalanand Singh and Krityanand Singh being the principal creditors; and consequently the Court of Wards in 1906 took over the charge of that share on the application of Kumar Chandranand Singh; but the actual management of the entire Banaili Raj is in the hands of Kumars Kalanand Singh and Krityanand Singh. The rent-roll of the entire estate is about 14 lakhs a year, and

the revenue and cesses payable annually are Rs. 2,56,244. In addition to this Rs. 17,445 are payable to superior landlords on account of rent.

"The estate derives its name from Banaili, a village in *pargana* Haveli in this district It contained the residence of the founder of the estate and continued to be the family headquarters until the late Raja Lilanand Singh Bahadur moved to Deorhi Ramnagar, a few miles distant from Banaili and thence to Deorhi Champanagar. Deorhi Ramnagar is the seat of his eldest son, Raja Padmanand Singh Bahadur, and Deorhi Champanagar of his two younger sons, Kumar Kalanand Singh and Kumar Kirtyanand Singh".

Since the passing of Bihar Zamindari Abolition Bill, this Raj has been vested in the State.

Bandarjhula.—It is situated at about 24 miles north-west of Kishanganj near the Nepal border. Some excavation has been done here by the Archaeological Department and one full size image of god Vishnu made of black marble is kept here One small fair is held yearly near the image. People call this image of Kanhaiya.

Banmankhi.—Banmankhi, a growing township on the Purnea-Murliganj railway section is fast growing into an important place. It is headquarters of Dharhara police-station and a Community Development Block. It is a big trade centre of jute, paddy, maize, tobacco, *ghee* and mustard oil. The merchants from western districts, namely, Muzaffarpur, Saran, etc., and also from Calcutta come to Banmankhi for business purposes throughout the year. A rural college has been started recently and there are High schools. There is a hostel for Harijans. The place is also well connected by roads with Purnea.

The place is very congested and the main market near the station is extremely dirty but the price of land within the market area is abnormally high. There are big godowns of grains and jute merchants. There is a proposal to start a sugar factory on co-operative basis.

Barari.—A village in the Katihar subdivision, situated at a distance of 22 miles south of Purnea. The Karagola railway station of the North Eastern Railway falls in this village. The station is named after Karagola *ghat* which is at a distance of five miles from here. The village is connected with Purnea both

by rail and metalled road (Ganga-Darjeeling Road). It has a police-station, a High school, a Middle school, a girls' Middle and a Primary school and a library. The post-office which is also in the village is called Gurubazar. Recently a "Gandhi Smriti Bhawan" has been constructed which has a beautiful site. The area of the village in 1951 census was 1,334 acres, number of occupied houses 204 with a population of 1,433

Barari is also the headquarters of the Barari *Anchal*. The area of the *anchal* corresponds with the area of the Barari police-station, being 188 square miles with a population of 93,133 according to 1951 census. Kursela, Semapur and Bhawanipur villages where big cultivators reside are in this *anchal*. The net rent demand of this *anchal* is Rs. 2,03,459, cess Rs 13,082 and miscellaneous Rs. 65,242.

The outward goods traffic of the Karagola Road station is considerable. Approximately 10,000 maunds jute, 1,000 maunds tobacco, 10,000 maunds *kalai* are annually exported from here. The first two commodities are sent to Calcutta and the last to Banaras and Kanpur. Due to closure of the Semapur Sugar Factory sugarcane of this area is sent to Hasanpur Sugar Mills in Darbhanga. Fish approximately of ten maunds is sent from here to Siliguri and Jalpaiguri daily Eggs are sent to Mahendrughat (Patna), Siliguri and Darjeeling Inward traffic consists of salt, cement, kerosene oil and Government foodgrains

Barijangarh.—It is a ruined fort in the Kishanganj subdivision, situated five miles south of Bahadurganj police-station. Regarding its name, there is a legend that it was built by Barijan, a brother of Benu, Raja of Benugarh Inside the enclosure may be traced a tank called Dak Pokhar, in connection with which absurd stories are told, and implicitly believed in, by the villagers. One of the least extravagant is that the earth of the tank, if taken near any other tank, has the power of immediately drawing forth from it all the fish it contains.

Barsoi.—A village in the Katihar subdivision situated about 30 miles away from Katihar and 4 miles away from Barsoi Junction of the N. E. F. Railway. It is now the headquarters of the circle of the same name. The circle office is in a rented building and situated one mile away from Barsoi railway station.

Regarding Barsoi, the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* published in 1911 had mentioned that "It has one of the principal markets in the district". But Barsoi has now lost some of its trade due to partition of the country in 1947. The former Parbatipur section of the Eastern Bengal State Railways which

connected Barsoi Junction with Parbatipur now falls in East Pakistan and so it has lost great sources of jute and hide. Before partition jute and hide were mostly despatched from Barsoi Junction railway station. There has been visa system and so trade has been restricted between the areas lying in East Pakistan and India. Barsoi Bazar is connected with Barsoi Junction railway station with four miles of unmetalled road. The river Mahananda which traverses this unmetalled road is still unbridged and consequently the goods are mainly carried on bullock carts. Barsoi *ghat* which was a good source of transhipment of goods has now become practically defunct due to silting of the source of the river Mahananda. The main trade of Barsoi is jute and next to it is hide. On an average about two lakh maunds of jute and 1,500 maunds of hides are usually exported from Barsoi, mainly through rail. Dried fish in a small quantity is exported from here. A weekly *hat* known as *Sukhatia* (dried stuff) clears a lot of dried fish at Barsoi Besides these, molasses (*gur*), country-made cloth, chillies, turmeric and vegetables are also the chief articles of the weekly *hat*. *Paikars*, or petty traders buy up those commodities in considerable quantities and retail them throughout the district.

The population of the village in 1901 was 3,101. Unfortunately the population of the village is not mentioned in the *District Census Handbook of Purnea*, 1951. From local enquiry it is reported that the population of the village is about 5,000.

Bathnaha.—There was an old village Bathnaha with a railway station of the same name. The neighbouring villages were Bhadesar and Bhatiahi. The present Bathnaha township has grown out of these three villages. It is situated at a distance of 46 miles north of Purnea and is in Araria subdivision.

This place has five *tolas*, i.e., Bathnaha *Tola*, two Kosi Colonies, Bhadesar and Brahmin *Tola*. The thana number is 145 of the village Bathnaha and two Kosi Colonies but the other two have a different thana number, i.e., 165. The police-station is at Forbesganj. There is one police out post at Bathnaha. There are 447 houses with a total population of 1,988, i.e., 1,086 males and 902 females.

Bhatiahi had sandy soil and it was just a waste land. Bhatiahi was affected by the great Earthquake of 1934. The soil is now becoming fertile.

At Bathnaha there is no river but by the side of the villages Mirganj and Amouna which is north of Bathnaha, there is the river Parman. Though this river becomes absolutely dry during

summer season but in rainy season it creates havoc. This river goes up to river Mahananda *via* Araria. In 1960 Kosi river had created a havoc.

Climate is not bad but as it is nearer to the borders of Nepal, the climate becomes too cold during winter season and even in summer season less humidity persists. The average rainfall is about 37 inches annually but every year it fluctuates. Sometimes the rainfall records up to 60 inches and the minimum is about 30 to 35 inches.

The local people as they were may be grouped as follows:—

Dhanuk	..	..	100 houses.
Harijan	..	..	40 houses
Tatma	.	..	40 houses.
Brahmin	.	..	15 houses.
Koeri	..	..	12 houses
Kayastha	..	.	6 houses

Since the introduction of the Kosi Project, Bathnaha township is growing day by day and different types of persons have come to stay. The Kosi Colony itself have employees of different caste and creed. Several Marwari, Punjabi, Sikh contractors, and others are now settling here. The Kosi Colony has an attractive townscape with 266 houses and a population of 656 persons.

The main Kosi Canal which is under construction is about ¾ mile away from Kosi Colony. There is one Inspection Bungalow at Kosi Colony. There is also one club which provides both indoor and outdoor games

There are two temples Recently one Mahadeva temple has been constructed. The other is of goddess Durga which is about 60 years old. There are mango orchards and people are interested in banana plantation. Potato, brinjal, etc., are the main vegetables and *bhadai*, jute, *kurthi*, etc., are the main crops of this locality. Occasionally new scientific agricultural implements are used here. Fertilisers, ash, cowdung, green manures are also used here. People are adopting Japanese method of cultivation.

Bathnaha is under Forbesganj Block. Since the block is functioning several *pucca* and *kutcha* wells have been sunk but people are allergic to take the full advantage of these wells. People mostly depend on rains.

There is one Veterinary hospital. Three co-operative societies are functioning here which provide loans to the local people.

There are three small good hotels. Previously there was one Union Board consisting of 11 members but it has now ceased to function since 1957 as there is now a *Gram Panchayat.*

There are one L. P., one Sanskrit U. P. and one M. E school. There are two *Kirtan Mandlis.* There is one Labour Welfare Centre.

There is one small regular market and one *hat* which is held on every Wednesday and Saturday.

So far communication is concerned, previously there was only railway bullock-cart. Till 1955 all the roads were *katcha.* Now the introduction of Kosi Project has helped a lot in developing the road communication. Recently a pitched road has been constructed parallel to the west of railway line. This road is known as Jogbani-Kalabalua Road. Another pitched road has been constructed to connect Bathnaha and Birpur. Private buses, trucks, etc., now ply on these roads.

So far the industries are concerned there is one inoperative rice mill and one operative flour mill.

Jute is sent to Forbesganj and from there it is exported to Calcutta.

It is expected that in very near future Bathnaha will be a busy mart and attract business people from outside to settle down at Bathnaha. It will be the main channel for export and import of commodities from Nepal, Saharsa district and Forbesganj. There is a heavy traffic of motor vehicles on Bathnaha-Birpur and Bathnaha-Jogbani routes.

Benugarh.—District Gazetteer of Purnea, 1911, mentions as follows:—

> "A ruined fort in the Kishanganj subdivision, situated about eight miles west of Bahadurganj. The ruins consist of ramparts, enclosing an area of nearly an acre, and are ascribed to Benu Raja, the brother of Asura mentioned in the article on Asurgarh."

There has been no further research into the antiquities of Benugarh.

Bhenryari.—A village north-east of Forbesganj bordering Nepal at a distance of 10 miles from Araria subdivision. This is a village ¾th of a mile away from Araria-Forbesganj Road.

Local tradition attributes some ancient bricks to the mythological Raja Birat of the Mahabharata. It is said that this popular belief is responsible for the name of Biratnagar in Nepal which is contiguous to it.

Bibiganj Hat.—This lies in Terhagachh *Anchal.* This is also another important market place of this subdivision. Previously Bibiganj *hat* was bigger. On opening of another *hat* in Nepal territory which is near to it, this *hat* declined but even then this is important The growth of this place hampers due to lack of communication.

Bishanpur—Bishanpur lies in Kochadhaman *Anchal* (Bahadurganj South). This place has grown very recently, and it has grown into a very big market. Bishanpur *hat* is the biggest *hat* of this subdivision fetching yearly about thirty to forty thousand rupees to the Government by auction. There are about 200 shops of different kinds which are of semi-permanent type. This has become a centre of jute trading of the area and during time of rains, jute is sent out by way of big boats through the rivers Ratua, Kankai and Mahananda

Chakla.—This is famous for manufacture of wheels for bullock-carts. About 300 families of this place follow this profession. An Industrial Carpenters' Co-operative Society has been formed here and 105 carpenters are members of this society.

Dharampur Pargana.—Regarding the old history of this *pargana* the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea,* 1911, by L. S. S. O'Malley, mentions as follows.—"A *pargana* in the west of the district with an area of about 964 square miles. It is the property of the Maharaja of Darbhanga, and is said to have been acquired by his ancestor Mahesh Thakur in the following manner Mahesh Thakur was a priest of the Rajas of Tirhut, and, when they were conquered by the Emperor of Delhi, sent his pupil Raghunandan Thakur to Akbar's Court. He gained Akbar's favour by his skill in polemics and a lucky prophecy. He foretold a storm, in which a tree, under which Akbar's tent was pitched, would be destroyed. The tent was removed, and some hours afterwards the tree was rent by lightning. Akbar thereupon conferred upon Raghunandan the whole of Tirhut, or at least an income of two per cent of its revenues, which, at his request, was transferred to his master, Mahesh Thakur. The estate comprising the *pargana* is divided into three parts called *zilas*, viz., Birnagar to the north-west, Bhawanipur to the south of Birnagar, and Gondwara to the east. At the Permanent Settlement it was assessed at a revenue of Rs. 2,31,585."

After the passing of the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950, this *pargana* has been now vested in State.

Dharara.—It is a village in the extreme west of the district, situated about 12 miles south of Raniganj, and 15 miles north-east of Dhamdaha. Regarding the old history of this village, the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea,* 1911, by L. S. S. O'Malley, mentions as follows:—

"There is an indigo factory here and the ruins of an old fort called Satligarh. At the north-west corner of the fort is a monolith called Manikthum, of which the following description is given by Colonel L. A. Waddell, I.M.S.,—'The pillar is of thick, inelegant shape, and has the same general proportions and appearance as the Ghazipur edict pillar, now in the grounds of the Benares College The stone is a light reddish granite of such fine texture as to appear almost like sandstone. It can scarcely be called a rude cylinder, as it is perfectly cylindrical and its surface is smooth and almost polished. It is no longer erect, but is inclined at an angle of about 65°—this inclination, I am informed, was given it about three years ago by the then Collector of the district, who dug around the pillar and then tilted it over in this way to make sure his excavation had reached the base.'

"As the appearance of the monolith was suggestive of its being probably on edict pillar, and its greater portion was buried under ground, I had it excavated. This operation showed that the pillar had originally been implanted for over half its length in a foundation of irregular layers of bricks and mortar. The pillar retained its smooth and almost polished surface throughout its extent, except in a few portions where this surface has scaled off, and where, about its middle third, the west face of the pillar had been very roughly chipped away to form an irregular oblong depression about 6 feet in length and about 2½ feet in breadth. The most careful search all over the pillar, however, failed to find any trace of an inscription. The basal extremity of the pillar was sharply truncated across and rested in the sand, and here immediately under the pillar was found a gold coin of Indo-Scythic character.

"The upper extremity of the pillar is perforated by a hole (12 inches deep, and in diameter 5½ inches at the top and 3½ inches at the bottom), which evidently formed the socket for the stem or bolt of a crowning ornament: and in forcibly wrenching out this latter, top of the shaft has been extensively fractured. Local tradition alleges that the shaft was formerly surmounted by the figure of a lion, but that this was removed many hundreds of years ago, no one knows where. The dimensions of the pillar are as follows:—total length is 19 feet 11 inches (of which 7½ feet are above ground): circumference at 3 feet from summit is 112½ inches.

"Regarding the purpose of this pillar there must still remain much doubt. The villagers in the neighbourhood call it 'Maniktham' or 'the precious pillar' of Hindu fable, and worship it Dr. Buchanan failed to get any local history or tradition concerning the stone. Now-a days, the villagers assert that this was the scene of the *Mahabharata* episode of the Sivaic Hiranya Kans'* attempted slaughter of his son Prahladha for devotion to the worship of Vishnu. King Hiranya Kans, it is alleged, lived in the adjoining fortress and sent out his son to be bound to this pillar and put to death here, when on the appeal of Prahladha to his deity, the latter in the form of Nara Sinha appeared incarnate in the lion figure surmounting the capital and saved his devotee. In this legendary tradition it is remarkable that the pillar is associated both with a human sacrifice and the presence of a surmounting lion; the former possibly suggestive of its being a *sati* pillar, while the latter indicates rather an *edict* (Asoka?) pillar. Perhaps it may be the upper part of an edict pillar which has been utilized for *sati* purposes. The stone had orig been carefully fashioned, while the rudely chipped depression is evidently of more recent date. The coin, too, with its Sivaic emblem on the reverse, might imply the creed of the person who erected the stone in this locality, thus coinciding with the popular tradition. It is also curious to find that the river which flows past the further side of the

*The name is so pronounced locally, not Hiranya Kashipu as is usual.

fort is named the Hiranya *nadi*, thus lending local colour to the applicability of the *Mahabharata* legend. The coin is described on page 209 of Von Sallet, Die Nachfolger Alexanders des Grossen. It is a coin of Vasudeva or Bazodeo (2nd Century A. D.)."*

A slightly different version of the legend is given by Mr. Byrne in the *Purnea Settlement Report*. "Formerly the demon king Hiranya Kasipu, who lived in the Satya Yuga, had his palace here. His son Prahlad insisted on believing in and uttering the name of his god. The father asked where his god was: the son replied that he was omnipresent: the father then asked if he was inside that pillar. Prahlad said "Yes", and then the father attacked the pillar with a sword hoping to injure his god. He cut off a portion of it, and then an incarnation of god, called Narasingha (half a man and half a lion), emerged and killed Hiranya Kasipu. The whole palace was then involved in ruin."

It appears from the *District Census Handbook of Purnea* (1951) that the village Dharara contains seven *tolas* all are called Dharara Milik except one which is called Dharara Chakla Munahi. There are three Lower Primary schools, two Upper Primary schools and two libraries in the village. Dharara has also a post-office and a police-station of the same name. The total area of this village as mentioned in the *District Census Handbook* is 718 acres and the number of houses are 1,111. The population of this village according to 1951 census is 5,038 persons (males 2,655 and females 2,383). The total number of literate persons is 735, i.e., 634 males and 101 females only. The incidence of literacy seems to be very low.

Forbesganj.—A town in the north-west of the Araria subdivision, situated 42 miles (by rail) north-west of Purnea and 18 miles north-west of Araria. A metalled road, namely, the Katihar-Purnea-Jogbani also connects Forbesganj with Purnea and Araria. Its population in 1901 was 2,029 as against 4,968 in 1921. In 1931 it rose to 5,939 as against 8,787 in 1941 and 11,551 in 1951.

Forbesganj is one of the best commercial centres of Purnea district. A great portion of trade with Morung district of Nepal and other districts of India passes through Forbesganj. A good number of Marwari merchants have settled here and deal in jute, grain, piece goods, oil and potato and have branches of their firms

*Note on the Maniktham Monolith, Proceedings, A. S. B., 1890, pp. 248—5.

in Nepal. Jute is the principal article of trade. The number of wholesale and retail dealers in Forbesganj is reported to be more than one hundred. Almost all the wholesale dealers whose number is reported to be 70 have pressing machines in which about 1,100 workers work daily. On an average about twelve to fifteen lakh maunds of jute are exported from here annually. Forbesganj falls in the centre of the jute-growing area of the Araria subdivision and so jute has a large turnover here. There are four rice and oil mills (Mahabir Private, Ltd., Jagdish Private, Ltd., Dhanawat Private, Ltd., and Bayunandan Private, Ltd.). The daily strength of workers in these mills is reported to be about 400. About six lakh maunds of paddy and one lakh maunds of mustard seed are annually crushed in these mills. Paddy is purchased locally and from the Morung district of Nepal while oilseed is mostly local. Nepali orange has brisk sale here and is also exported from here to Purnea and Katihar.

There is also a cold storage owned by the Mahabir Industries Private, Ltd., in which about 40,000 maunds of potatoes are stored. Besides piece goods and other commodities of daily use have a brisk sale. A State warehouse corporation and co-operative *vyapar bhandar* have been started to give storing facilities to agriculturists.

The *District Census Handbook, Purnea*, 1951, has given statistics of town population by livelihood classes and the same table is given below to appreciate the commercial importance of Forbesganj:—

Total persons.	V. Production (other than cultivation).		VI. Commerce.		VII. Transport.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
11,551	801	413	2,160	1,544	342	304

VIII. Other services and miscellaneous sources.		IV. Non-cultivating of land, agricultural rent receivers and their dependants.		I-III. Cultivators, cultivating labourers and their dependants.	
Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
1,623	1,262	39	44	2,071	948

From the above statistics it will be clear that about two-third of the population of Forbesganj were of non-agricultural group and even in the agricultural group the agricultural labourers were predominant. These local agricultural labourers have great source of avenue of employment in Forbesganj town during the slack agricultural season.

The place is called after the late Mr. A. J. Forbes, the ex-proprietor of the Sultanpur estate, which had vested in the State under the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950. Investigation proved futile to trace the year of settlement of Forbesganj with Mr, A. J. Forbes. Mr. W. W. Hunter in the *Statistical Account of Bengal,* Vol. XV (Monghyr and Purniah) in 1877 in connection with the indigo concerns of the Sultanpur estate of Mr A. J. Forbes had mentioned the village Forbesabad which most probably later turned into Forbesganj.

Forbesganj has a municipality which was established in 1912. It has an Inspection Bungalow, block office, a dispensary, veterinary dispensary, a High school, two Middle schools, one for girls, a Junior Basic Training school, a newly started college, police-station, railway station, post and telegraph office, telephone exchange, sub-registry office, and the branch offices of State Bank of India and Central Bank. It is said that Forbesganj has the best climate in the district, and it commands a good view of the Himalayas on clear winter days.

A big fair is held here in November-December which lasts for about a month. Commercial goods of all descriptions have brisk sale in the *mela.* The *mela* season of Purnea district begins from Forbesganj *mela* which is held just after harvest of jute crop and so commercial goods have good sale. Shops from Ludhiana, Calcutta, Malda, etc , usually come in the *mela.* Purnea people have great knack for purchasing goods of daily use in the *melas* and in the *melas* they make purchase for the ensuing year and marriages. The cinema pictures and *nautanki* usually attract a vast number of people and the Government realise good income from Entertainment Tax.*

Marketing survey of Forbesganj.—[The name is called after A J. Forbes, the proprietor of Sultanpur estate in the last quarter of 19th century.] Forbesganj is one of the important trade centres of Purnea. It falls in the centre of jute-growing area of Araria subdivision and in the vicinity of fertile Morung district of Nepal The commercial potentiality of the place attracted

*It is reported that in 1960 *mela* of Forbesganj, the daily income of Government from Entertainment Tax came to about Rs. 1,000.

several big Marwaris from the beginning of the present century who have firms here and also in Nepal. The chief mercantile goods of Forbesganj are jute, paddy, mustard seeds, potato and piece goods.

Jute.—Jute is extensively grown in the Araria subdivision and in the neighbouring district of Morung in Nepal. Forbesganj the only town of the Araria subdivision naturally attracts the jute growers to send their jute product and foodgrains to Forbesganj market. The number of wholesale dealers in jute is reported to be 70 and the retail dealers about 32. The peak period of jute is from September to February and the slump period from March to June. Forbesganj usually has a good turnover during the peak period when the agriculturists usually overflood the market with jute. This is also the period when jute is harvested The agriculturists who have neither storing facilities nor patience to hoard because of the needs of money are constrained to send the jute products in the *golas* of the wholesale dealers or outright sell in the hands of either retail dealers or the wholesale dealers. The main source of jute supply to Forbesganj *mandi* is the Hathkhola market within the municipal area where the agriculturists from the far flung interior areas daily bring their jute products on bullock-carts and the merchants in the morning go to this market and directly purchase the jute from the farmers About 300 bullock-carts, the average capacity of cart being ten maunds daily come to Hathkhola. From local enquiry it was found that 3,000 maunds to 5,000 maunds of jute daily comes to Hathkhola market during the peak period and 500 to 1,000 maunds during the slump period. On an average 15 lakh maunds of jute is handled at Forbesganj *mandi*.

The number of *golas* is 70. The *gola* usually charges 8 annas per cart as *dholai kharch* or unloading fee. Besides it takes other charge, viz., *briti* for *gosala* or *dharmsala kharch* eight annas per cart. It makes advance on the security of the products kept in the *golas* and charges one *paisa* per rupee interest per month. Besides it takes storing charge one *paisa* per rupee on sale goods which are sold and kept in the *gola*.

Labourer.—On an average 20 to 25 labourers work in the *gola* of the wholesale dealers. The total number of labourers engaged in all the pressing machines of Forbesganj is reported to be 1,100. The wages are fixed not on days work but on the number of preparing bales. For one bale the labourer gets 14 annas and on an average, it is reported after local enquiry from the labourers that a labourer prepares three bales daily and thus he earns Rs. 2 and 10 annas per day. These labourers do not

come under the purview of the Factories Act, 1947. About two-third of labourers is from Darbhanga, Champaran, North Monghyr, Saran and one-third is local. They are not provided with quarters but are permitted to sleep during nights in the *gola*. They usually take their meals in the cheap roadside hotels and that is why the number of roadside tea stalls and hotels is large. About half of the wages of the labourers is spent on diet and tea.

Foodgrains.—Besides jute, paddy is grown extensively in the Araria subdivision and in the Morung district of Nepal. All the four mills mentioned before are of equal crushing capacity. Six lakh maunds of paddy and one lakh maund of oilseeds are procured locally and some portion of paddy is also imported from the Morung district of Nepal.

Labourer.—About 400 labourers on an average work daily during the crushing season The labourers get Rs. 1-8-0 per day and the wage is distributed weekly. Out of the 400 labourers, only 40 are permanent. Only permanent labourers are provided with quarters. The permanent labourers get ration at the rate of three seers per rupee, per head, six seers per week. The majority of the labourers are outsiders.

Cold storage.—There is also a cold storage owned by Mahabir Private Industries, Ltd. Only potato is kept in the storage, the capacity of the cold storage is 40,000 maunds. Potato is grown extensively locally. It is reported that besides local potato, some portion is imported from Patna and Chapra. In 1957 and 1958 only 20,000 maunds of potatoes were stored as against 35,000 maunds in 1959.

Piece goods.—In dealings of cloth there is very limited distinction between wholesale and retail dealers. There are only three wholesale dealers and the number of retail dealers is about 20. The cloth has brisk sale at Forbesganj. Woollen cloth is mostly purchased from Forbesganj *mela* in which shops from Ludhiana also come. Forbesganj *mela* starts in the beginning of winter season (November December) and so the woollen cloth and other cloth have brisk sale here. Forbesganj *mela* which lasts for a month also attracts a good number of tailors and they usually have good income. Quilt, mattress, etc., also are sewn and made here.

Huller.—Besides the four big rice mills there are about 25 hullers for paddy crushing. About 50,000 maunds of paddy is pounded annually.

Orange.—Nepali orange during November and December has brisk sale. From here it is also exported to Katihar and Purnea.

Warehouse.—Bihar State Warehouse Corporation has established its branch at Forbesganj on the 11th September, 1959. The main aims and objects of the Corporation are to offer storing facility, cheap credit facility, scientific storage and stabilisation of market price. The sole aim of the Corporation is to save the agriculturists from the undue exploitation of the native merchants. The Corporation makes advance to the agriculturists on the security of the storaged agricultural products—75 per cent on foodgrains and 70 per cent on jute of the total value of the goods. The details of the Warehouse Corporation in 1959-60 are as follows —

Jute stored—40,000 maunds

Cereals—76,400 maunds.

Bank advancement—Rs. 15,19,800.

Number of depositors—175 (22 per cent cultivators)

Galgalia.—A village situated in the extreme north of the district in Kishanganj subdivision. It is on the border of Nepal It falls under the revenue jurisdiction of the Thakurganj circle It has a railway station, a post office, the offices of the Central Excise and State Excise, a Lower Primary school and a library It has two rice mills registered under the Factories Act

Since it is on the border of Nepal a Border Post for examination of consignments going to Nepal from India has been established since November, 1958. This post is gaining importance and at present about 300 invoices are being dealt between India and Nepal through this Border Post. The excisable commodities dealt through the Border Post consist mainly of manufactured commodities, viz, cement, sugar, cloth, foot-wear, batteries and petroleum products. The Galgalia Post Office has jurisdiction over Jhapa district of Eastern Nepal.

In the list of revenue villages its name is Bhatgaon with an area of 3,650 acres and the number of occupied houses 435 with a population of 2,008. The inhabitants are mostly agriculturists There are a few Marwaris and Banias who are engaged in trade and commerce. The chief commodities for trade are jute, paddy and oilseeds. Bhadarpur (Nepal) is nearby Galgalia which is one of the chief trade centres of Nepal.

Haveli pargana.—The last *District Gazetteer of Purnea,* 1911, mentions, "A *pargana,* also known as Haveli Purnea extending over an area of 787 square miles. At the time of the Permanent

Settlement it was held by Rani Indrabati, the daughter of Madhu Singh, Raja of Darbhanga, having been given to her as her dowry on her marriage with Raja Indra Narayan Singh. The latter having died childless, her agent, Babu Bijay Gobind Singh of Pharkiya (a *pargana* in North Monghyr) personated a relative of her deceased husband, and got himself adopted by her. Then, as *kartaputra*, or manager, he took possession of her estates and proceeded to enjoy them. Litigation ensued, and both sides were financed by Babu Pratap Singh, a banker of Murshidabad, who in 1850 purchased the *pargana* in execution of his own decrees. Subsequently Babu Dharam Chand Lal, a Purnea banker, son of Nackched Lal, purchased the estate from Babu Pratap Singh, and it now stands in the name of his wife, Musamat Bhagwanbati Choudhrain of Purnea."

After the passing of the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950, this *pargana* has been now vested in State.

Jalalgarh.—Regarding the old history of this place, the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea,* 1911, by L. S. S. O'Malley, mentions as follows:—

"A ruined fort in the Purnea subdivision situated 13 miles north of Purnea close to the Jalalgarh railway station. It stands on what was formerly an island in an old channel of the Kosi river, and is a very conspicuous ruin in good preservation. It is a large quadrangular structure with lofty walls, and was built by the Muhammadans as a frontier post to protect the border against invasion from Nepal. According to the chronicles of the Khagra family, it was built for this purpose by the first Raja of Khagra, Saiyid Muhammad Jalal-ud-din, on whom the title of Raja was conferred by Jahangir (1605 - 27); and, according to other accounts, by the Nawab of Purnea, Saif Khan, in 1722. It appears, however, to have been in existence before the latter date. According to the Riyazu-s-Salatin, 'the Raja of Birnagar had a force of 15,000 cavalry and infantry; and other inhabitants of that part of the Chakwar tribe, etc., were refractory and of plundering propensity, and used to annoy much the travellers. Therefore, on the limits of the Morang, the fort of Jalalgarh was erected, and a commandant, in charge of the fort, was posted there.' It then proceeds to relate how Saif Khan, on being

appointed *faujdar* of Purnea, was also made commandant of Jalalgarh and given the *jagir* attached to that post. Subsequently, the fort was held by the seventh Raja of Khagra, Saiyad Muhammad Jalil, who refused to pay revenue to the Nawab, Saulat Jang, i.e., Saiyad Ahmed Khan. The latter, therefore, made an expedition against him, captured the fort and took him prisoner.

In the early part of the 19th century, we find that the Magistrate of Purnea, in consequence of the unhealthiness of the town of Purnea, recommended the removal of the headquarters to Jalalgarh, which he described as 'elevated, open and at a distance from jungle, while the walls of the old fortress might be turned to account in the construction of a safe and commodious jail'.* There is a tradition that a Muhammadan fanatic raised the standard of revolt here during the Mutiny, and tried to encourage the followers by the usual assurances that he would swallow the bullets of the infidel soldiery. The end of the movement was ignominious, for, after inducing his dupes to bring him contributions in gold, he disappeared in the night and was never heard of again."

The fort is situated at a distance of one mile south-east from the Purnea-Araria Road. The history of the fort is shrouded in uncertainty but from the sight of this ruined fort it appears that it was built for the purpose of military garrison against the inroads of the Gurkhas, as described by L. S. S. O'Malley.

Jalalgarh has an area of 1,925 acres and 201 number of houses. According to the census of 1951, the population is 975, i.e., 529 males and 446 females About 144 males and 44 females are literate.

Jogbani.—A village growing in importance situated in the extreme north of the district at a distance of about 50 miles from Purnea with which it is connected both by metalled road and railway. Jogbani is the terminus of one section of North East Frontier Railway. The main importance of the village lies in the fact that it is on the border of Nepal and commands a considerable commercial and strategic importance. There is a narrow strip of no man's land separating India from Nepal. Both the

*W. Hamilton, *Description of Hindostan*, I, 286.

Government of India and Nepal have their staff in their particular areas to check smuggling and enforce the payment of custom duty.

A metalled road connects Jogbani with Biratnagar (3½ miles), Dharan (31 miles) in Nepal. There is a regular bus service controlled by the Nepal Government to and from between Jogbani and Biratnagar and Dharan. The buses and trucks have free access to stand near the railway station and at other places of Jogbani. No restriction is imposed on the free movement of passenger buses, jeeps and public carriers carrying licensed merchandise goods. On local enquiry it appears that there is a gentleman's agreement between the Governments of Nepal and India not to impose restriction on vehicular traffic up to three miles in their respective territories.

Because of the particular situation of Jogbani it controls a considerable movement of trade and commerce to and from Nepal. The majority of the dealers are Indian Marwaris and Indian merchants who virtually command the trade and commerce of this side of Nepal. Jogbani is a main centre from where commercial goods and other goods are sent to Biratnagar district of Nepal. At Biratnagar there is an officer known as the Assistant Commercial Attache for India under the immediate control of the Embassy of India at Kathmandu to look into the commercial interests of India. The Indian Post and Telegraph Office at Jogbani is also the centre of postal communication of the three districts of Eastern Nepal, viz., Morang, Dhankota and Bhojpur.

As the terminus railway station of the Katihar-Jogbani section of the North East Frontier Railway, Jogbani railway station handles a considerable inward and outward traffic on passengers and goods. The chief exports of this station are timber which come from the forests of Nepal, hides, medicinal herbs, jute and matchwood of Nepal. The chief imports are grain, cloth, kerosene oil, salt, coal, cosmetic goods, etc. These articles are taken from Jogbani to Biratnagar and Dharan through roads. Weekly *hats* are held at Jogbani on Sundays and Thursdays. The recent development of roads and particularly the construction of the Assam Link Road has encouraged regular transport of goods from Calcutta to places in Purnea district including Jogbani by trucks. The Eastern India Transport Agency, Asoka Transport Agency, Balurghat Transport Agency and the Everest Roadways which have their headquarters at Calcutta have their branch offices at Jogbani from where the merchants of Biratnagar and Dharan get delivery of the

merchandise goods. It is said that on an average monthly 40 trucks containing approximately about 5,000 maunds of goods of the above mentioned transport agencies come to Jogbani and from here they are sent to Biratnagar and Dharan. These goods chiefly consist of cloth and medicines.

The importance of Jogbani as the main town in this area will go on increasing with the implementation of Kosi Project. Cheap electricity will be available and there is every chance of Jogbani being more industrialised in the near future. At Jogbani proper there are three rice mills, three flour mills and six saw machine installations. As a centre of timber trade which includes soft wood which could be utilised for the making of toys and matches. There is a positive industrial potentiality for wood utilization industries, such as a match factory or a toy manufacturing centre.

It is guessed that the present population of the village is near about five thousand souls. In this context it has to be mentioned that in 1951 census the population of Jogbani (wrongly printed as Joghani) was recorded only as 152 in 35 occupied houses. This mistake is probably due to the elimination of the two villages, viz., Dakhin Mahesri and Uttar Mahesri (thana nos. 175 and 176) which were not mentioned in the *Purnea District Census Handbook of* 1951. The present population of Jogbani has a large element of people from Saran, Darbhanga and other districts of Bihar and some of the districts of Uttar Pradesh. They have been attracted by the jute mill and some industrial concerns like sugar and saw mills situated on the soil of Nepal. There are two big jute mills on the soil of Nepal, near Jogbani which employ about 5,000 labourers of the districts of Saran, Shahabad and Darbhanga of Bihar. Since Morung is a surplus district in jute practically no supply is made in these two jute mills of Nepal.

Jogbani has a State-managed hospital, a post and telegraph office, a High school, a police outpost and the office of the Border Examiner, land custom. There are also subordinate staff of the Central Excise and the State Excise Departments, Anti-smuggling squad and a C. I. D. section at Jogbani. Some of the incumbancies are required to check smuggling, border trade and the other crimes. Nepali *ganja* is chiefly smuggled. In 1959 the Excise staff posted at Jogbani is understood to have detected the smuggling of about 2,000 maunds. Silver Tibetan coins used to be smuggled because of their artistic value. The condition of the lanes, bye-lanes and drains is miserable. They become all the more awful during the rains. There is a *Gram Panchayat*

which was established in 1956. The *Gram Panchayat* does not appear to have done much for improvement of sanitation or the development of village.

Kankjol.—The last *District Gazetteer of Purnea,* 1911, by Mr. L. S. S. O'Malley mentions:—

"A *pargana* in the south of the district with an area of 148 square miles. There is a curious legend about the origin of the name, which is also current in some districts of Bengal. It is said that the Emperor Akbar sent an envoy into several districts in the Gangetic delta with orders to explore them and their waterways, and that, wherever he landed, he beat a drum and proclaimed the suzerainty of Akbar. From this was derived the name Kankjol meaning 'drum on the side'.* The name is an old one, being the designation in Todar Mal's rent-roll of a *mahal* in *Sarkar* Audambar or Tandah. There is also a *pargana* Kankjol, south of the Ganges, in the Rajmahal subdivision of the Santal Parganas. 'Kankjol,' writes General Cunningham, 'is an old town, which was once the headquarters of an extensive province, including the whole of the present district of Rajmahal, and a large tract of country which is now on the east of the Ganges, but which in former days was on its west bank. Even at the present day this tract is still recorded as belonging to Kankjol; and I was, therefore, not surprised to hear the *zamindars* of Inayatpur and the surrounding villages to the east of the Ganges say that their lands were in Kankjol. The simple explanation is that the Ganges has changed its course. At the time of the Muhammadan occupation it flowed under the walls of Gaur, in the channel of the present Bhagirathi river. Part of the Trans-Gangetic Kankjol is in the Purnea district bounded by Akbarpur, and part in the Malda district bounded by Malda proper' "†

Kankjol *pargana* extends to the districts of Santhal Parganas and Purnea in Bihar and also to the Malda district of West Bengal. Only a very small portion of this *pargana* falling on the left hand side of the Ganga at the junction of Santhal Parganas and Malda border falls within this district, and it is still there.

**Purnea Settlement Report*, p. 17.

†*Reports Arch. Surv. Ind.* Vol. XV, p. 37.

Karagola or Karhagola.—An ancient village* 27 miles south of Purnea in the Katihar subdivision, situated on the river Ganga, five miles south of Karagola Road station of the North Eastern Railway. It is now in the Barari *Anchal*. It was formerly an important trade centre, of which there is a mention in the *Riyazu-s-Salatin* (1788). It is stated in that work that "Gandahgola (Karagola) on the banks of the Ganges was the resort of traders and *mahajans* from various places. Owing to cheapness of foodgrains and comforts, land-holders, travellers and professional men came from every part and dwelt there." Karagola is the terminus of the Ganga-Darjeeling Road. Its commercial importance is due to the Karagola *ghat* where a large number of boats ply to and from between Karhagola and Sahibganj of Santhal Parganas and Bhagalpur. Commodities which are exported from here are jute, hide, maize and mustard seed, while the imports are machineries, coal, medicines and foodgrains. Formerly, the steamers of the India General Steam Navigation Company used to ply but they had from 1958 ceased to function which had affected the trade adversely. A casual steamer of the Ganga-Brahmaputra Water Transport visits the place, but without a regular steamer service the condition will not improve The expansion of the railways as stated before has affected the river-borne traffic of Karagola but it is still a place of importance for Ganga despatch service The several important transport agencies, viz, the East India Transport Corporation, the Everest Roadways, Asoka Transport Agency, Balurghat Transport Agency and the Bharat Yatayat which have their headquarters at Calcutta, have their branch offices here. These agencies are doing useful service in carrying the goods swiftly and comparatively at a cheaper rate from the railway Swiftness particularly in jute traffic is essential. It is presumed that on average ten to twelve lakh maunds of jute is sent from Karagola *ghat* to Calcutta. It approximately handles the export and import trade of the value of four to five crore rupees annually. Except *ghat* and the fair the village is of little importance. It has a post office.

The place is known for a large fair, which has declined of late years, but was formerly one of the biggest in Bengal. The fair has been described in Hunter's *Account of Purnea* which is reproduced in the old *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911), as follows:—

"Originally, it is said, the fair was held at Pirpainthi on the south of the Ganges in the Bhagalpur district

*Karagola village has no existence now. The entire village has been eroded by the Ganga. The village Kolgawarn (thana no. 244) is now called Karagola.

when the Ganges flowed at the foot of the Pirpainthi hill. The date of its transfer to the northern or Purnea bank is not known, but it must have been very soon after the commencement of the 19th century. The fair continued to be held down to 1824 at Kachua Kol, but during the six following years the site was removed to Mandigorendi. In 1832 the site was again changed, and until 1843 the fair was held at Kantanagar about two miles east of Korha. In 1844, for the first time, it was held on land belonging to the Maharaja of Darbhanga in a village called Bakhiya Sukhai. In 1851 the site was transferred to Karagola, which is within the same noblemen's property; and the fair was held there till 1887, when it was again removed to Kantanagar owing to the erosion of the bank at Karagola.

'The fair is held on a large sandy plain, which, during the period of its continuance, is covered with streets of small shops constructed of bamboos and mats. In these shops nearly every article of native domestic use is to be found. There is a very large sale of cloth of every kind, from thick English woollens to fine Dacca muslins. Cotton longcloths of Europeans and native makes, cut into lengths to make *dhotis* for men or *saris* for women, are also abundant. A brisk trade is carried on in iron plough-shares, knives and razors, brass and iron cooking utensils; the southern thanas of Purnea supply blankets and rugs from near Katihar and Kadwa, and reed mats from Balarampur, while tents and *daris* are brought in from elsewhere. Monghyr finds a market here for her ornamental cabinet wares, as well as for commoner sorts of furniture, such as chairs, tools and tables; while her quarries supply querns, or hand-mills for grinding corn, *sils* or flat stones on which spices are pounded, and *lauriyas* or rolling pins. Calcutta and some of the large up-country towns send dressed leather, boots, looking-glasses, shawls, Rampur *chadars*, silks and *kinkhabs*. The spice market is generally a large one; but only as much foodgrain as is necessary for the wants of visitors is to be obtained. Though Karagola is on the Ganges, it has long been a famous frontier fair for Bhotias

> and Nepalis. Their attendance has diminished, but they still visit it, bringing knives, *kukris*, yak tails, ponies, and drugs, such as *chiretta* and musk. They also supply peculiar articles of commerce, the carapace of the pangolin or *bajarkit* (*Manis pentadactyla*), with the dried flesh attached, which fetches a high price as in the opinion of both Bengalis and Biharis it forms the most powerful of aphrodisiacs. The fair is held on the Maghi Purnima, i.e., the full moon day of Magh (February), which is an auspicious day among Hindus for bathing in the Ganges, for on it *Kalijuga* began."

It has declined partly due to the opening of the new *melas*, viz., Gulabbag and Forbesganj and partly owing to the elimination of the *zamindars* by whom it was liberally encouraged. It has only now religious sanctity.

Kasba.—The last *District Gazetteer of Purnea*, 1911, mentions as follows.—

> "A village in the Purnea subdivision, situated eight miles north of Purnea Population (1901) 7,600 Kasba, which lies, on the Eastern Bengal State Railway, is the chief centre of the rice trade in the district, and is also an important entrepot for jute, the annual sales of which are said to amount to over ten lakhs. Messrs. Ralli Brothers have an agency here and work a jute press. A number of Marwari firms have also established themselves in the village, and deal in jute, grain and hides."

Due to lapse of time since O'Malley's days there had been some fundamental changes in Kasba and so the observation of Mr. O'Malley does not hold good now to a great extent. The name of the railway is now North East Frontier Railway which was a few years before called North-Eastern Railway. The firm Ralli Brothers had disappeared since long.

Kasba is now the headquarters of a block of the same name which was inaugurated on the 2nd October, 1957. This village, *thana* number 249 is under the jurisdiction of a police-station of the same name. The village has one post office, one Lower Primary school, one Upper Primary school, one Middle school, one High school, a State dispensary and a railway library. The area of this village is 399 acres and the number of houses is

1,454. The population of this village according to 1951 census is 8,261 (4,268 males and 3,993 females). The total number of literate persons is 2,213, i.e., 1,815 males and 398 females. The incidence of literacy seems to be very low. Mostly people of this village are engaged in cultivation, production other than cultivation, commerce, transport and other services and miscellaneous sources.

This village is now electrified. Since the functioning of a block of the same name, the villagers have been much benefited by the construction of borings, tube-wells, irrigational wells and *pucca* wells. The agricultural economy of this village is improving due to the use of fertilisers, new implements, wasteland reclamation and Japanese method of cultivation.

Kasba was a few years back an important trade centre of Purnea. The commercial importance of Kasba received a great set back since the establishment of the Gulabbagh *Mandi*. The hand-pounded rice of Kasba was very popular and used to be sent out. But due to the establishment of a large number of rice mills in Purnea district, the hand-pounded rice of Kasba has practically lost its importance. Though Kasba has lost much of its past commercial importance still it is an important trade centre of Purnea and an important annual *mela* is held. The chief commercial commodities of the place are jute and grains. The traders of Kasba are quite rich.

It appears that the people of this village like other villagers are much *mela* minded. They spend most of their hard earned money from jute cultivation in these *melas*.

Katihar.—Mr. L. S. S. O'Malley, in the *District Gazetteer of Purnea*, 1911, mentions:—

> "A village in the south of Purnea subdivision situated 18 miles south of Purnea. Population (1901) 9.761. Katihar is the chief railway centre in the district, being an important junction at which the Bengal and North Western Railway meets the Bihar section of the Eastern Bengal State Railway. The latter is continued to Manihari *Ghat* on the Ganges, whence a steamer plies to Sakrigali, establishing communication with the East Indian Railway. The junction is especially noticeable for the thousand labourers who pass through it during the cold weather on their way to the eastern districts. Formerly they used to cross the Kosi from Khanwa

Ghat to Anchra *Ghat* and travel by a road along the north of the district, but they have given up this route since the through line to Katihar was opened. The rush east is noticed at Katihar at the end of September and lasts till the middle of December, the return west going on from the end of February till June. The coolies travel at reduced fares and generally go to Parbatipur, whence they separate for Goalundo, Siliguri and Dhubri.

"Katihar is the headquarters of the sheep-breeding trade of Purnea, and rough blankets are manufactured by a colony of Gareris. There is also a large export of rice and oilseeds. The town contains two dispensaries, one of which belongs to the railway, a Munsif's Court, police-station and Middle English school. It was formerly known as Saifganj; but when the railway was extended to it, in order to avoid confusion between two names so similar as Sahibganj and Saifganj, the name Katihar was given to the station from the neighbouring village of that name, which also gives its name to the surrounding *pargana*. The place is said to have been established by Nawab Saif Khan about 150 years ago."

There have been fundamental changes in Katihar since Mr. O'Malley's days. The name of the railway is now North-East Frontier Railway which was a few years back known as North-Eastern Railway. The name East Indian Railway has changed to Eastern Railway. Katihar has expanded enormously and is now the largest town in the district of Purnea with an area of 8 square miles. It derived its name from a small village on the north-east, called *Dighi-Katihar* where there is a big tank (*dighi*) excavated for the troops, when the soldiers of the Nawab of Purnea fought with the troops of Nawab of Murshidabad Katihar has grown out of Dighi-Katihar, Gamitola, Erakitola and Gareri tola.

There are two small rivers the Kali Kosi and Kamla on the west and east of Katihar respectively. The rivers are no longer perennial.

This town is only 154 ft. above the sea level and the lie of the land towards river Kali Kosi and Kamla is high. So the drainage system which is urgently required for the town has been a problem since the year 1927. The municipality covers a

congested and populous area and for the improvement of sanitation, a proper drainage system is absolutely necessary. The railways have improved the sanitation of their colonies by excavations of "surface drains" of different depths. But for want of "*outwalls*" these drains are all full during rains.

Its population in 1951 was 42,365 and in 1961 it has grown up to 59,419. It has got a police-station of the same name and its *thana* number is 81. At present there are 8,000 houses and about 500 to 600 huts. Many of the houses and huts are shared by more than one family. There is keen housing problem. About 40 per cent of the total population are literate.

The original people of Katihar are *Shuris, Kaibrata, Gandhabanik* and *Nishads* (fishermen). They speak a dialect which is a blend of Bengali and Hindi. When the town grew, people from different districts of Bihar and Bengal came down to work here and settle. Formerly about 30 per cent of Mohammadans were living in Katihar, compared to Hindus. After partition many Mohammadan families have left for Pakistan and instead a very big exodus of Hindus from East Bengal have come to settle at Katihar. The industrialisation at the town is giving it a cosmopolitan character.

A class of Mohammadans from Murshidabad called Shershabadis (colloquially known as *Badias*) who speak a mixed Bengali dialect had come in thousands to settle in villages surrounding Katihar within the last thirty years. They are, as a class good agriculturists. A good number of Marwaris, Punjabis, Sindhis have flocked at Katihar for business.

As the town grew the Munsif's Court which was at Hasanganj, seven miles on the north was shifted to Katihar in 1903. A small charitable dispensary and a Middle English school were established in 1903. The town now includes part of Durgapur, Dalan, Chitoria, Mirchai, Baigana, Saifganj, Daharia Mouzas, etc. Further expansion is inevitable taking in the upland which grows crops and vegetables. The town could also grow towards Manihari where the soil is sandy and does not grow good crops.

The town is at the junction of roads from all sides, (*i*) Purnea-Katihar Road, (*ii*) Katihar-Manihari Road, (*iii*) Katihar Roshno *Hat* Road, (*iv*) Katihar-Korha Road joining Ganga-Darjeeling Road on west and Hafla-Hasanganj Road. Katihar is connected via Purnea with distant places like Nepal, Bengal and interior of the district by metalled road. Buses and trucks ply on these to distant places with passengers and commodities.

The main road in Mangal Bazar area is now known as the "Shahid Dhruba Path", to commemorate the name of Dhrubalal Kundu, a local martyr of 1942 National Movement He was a boy of thirteen only and died of a gunshot in August Movement The most prominent junction of the roads in front of Katihar police-station is known as "Shahid-Chauk" to commemorate the martyrs, who raided the Katihar police-station at that time

Some of the roads bear the name of the leaders and some of the prominent persons of Katihar, e g., Gandhi Road, Rajendra Prasad Road, Jawahar Lal Nehru Road, Shri Krishna Singh Road, Abdul Bari Road, Dinanath Mishra Road, Nandan Prasad Road, Md Baksh Choudhury Road, H. M. Jhunjhunwala Road, Labooral Haque Road, Kishori Lal Road, Kundu Road, Keshablal Road, Parashar Bhattacharjee Road and Tribeni Nayak Road, etc

It would be interesting to trace the place name of the different muhallas of Katihar The northern most muhalla of Ward number I was Baghoabari as it is said leopard used to live in this area. Now the name is changed to Harigram to commemorate the name of Haripada Bhattacharya, one of the first Bengalis to come to Katihar A lane in Ward number I bears his name

Driver *tola* is the area where the railway drivers mostly reside Mangal Bazar also known as Station Bazar used to sit every Tuesday There is a daily market now Amlatola is the place where '*Amlas*' (ministerial officers) of court reside *Baniatola* is named after the *Gandhabaniks* of Bengal, who claim to have come to Katihar about 300 years ago. Durgapore mohalla is a part of the mouza of that name. Choudhury *tola* is the residence of the famous Mohammadan Choudhury family who migrated from Gaya. Mirchaibari derived its name from mouza Mirchai. The original villages were acquired by the Eastern Bengal Railway. The new subdivisional headquarters have been constructed at a part of Mirchaibari.

Katihar is now a very big junction of railways and the busiest in metre gauge. In 1884 the Manihari-Katihar-Kasba line was constructed and Katihar-Parbatipore line of the Eastern Bengal State Railway was constructed in 1889. When the Kursela Bridge on the Kosi river of the B. N. W, Railway was completed in 1905, B. N. W. Railway was connected with Katihar and the line was extended to Jogbani from Kasba, and from Forbesganj to Anchraghat. After that the Katihar-Godagari section, via Malda of Bengal was constructed in 1909. Thus a big junction has grown up, with bungalows and quarters. With the development

of railways, an Anglo-Indian Colony had grown up. The railway station handles a large bulk of commercial goods and passengers everyday.

Katihar is a centre of seven railway junctions, viz., Katihar-Maniharighat, Katihar-Sinbhabad, Katihar-Jogbani, Katihar Radhikapore, Katihar-Amingaon (Assam), Katihar-Saharsa and Katihar-Lucknow.

There have been many changes in the name of the railways which have been mentioned. Recently a broad gauge line has been joined to Katihar from Kajurighat via Malda. An extensive railway yard with a separate station has been constructed. The present railway yard has got a capacity of about 5,000 to 6,000 wagons. The growth of a number of industries and particularly jute discussed elsewhere has led to the growing importance of this station. Katihar is a great trade centre. Through this town business with Nepal, West Bengal and Pakistan takes place. Jute which is grown only in Purnea district in Bihar is purchased, imported and exported through it. It is a big market for cloth, glass-wares, glass-bangles (*churi*), *biri* leaves, aluminium-brass utensils, foodgrains, log and wood furniture, clay-images and idols.

There are four daily *bazars*. The municipal market constructed recently has bright prospect in future. Over and above these daily *bazars*, Katihar holds three big *hatias* (Bara *hat*, Mangal *hat* and Charles *hat*) on fixed days in a week. There are many feeder *hats* surrounding Katihar on different days from where commodities are brought for Katihar market. Katihar is famous for three *melas*, *Kalibari mela*, *Durgasthan mela* and *Janmastami mela*. They are very popular and are visited by thousands from villages during these festivals. Of recent years, Durga *puja* and Saraswati *puja* of school children have surpassed all the other festivals for popularity. There are five High schools for boys (with co-education) and one for girls. Primary education through the municipality has spread and at present there are thirty Primary schools. One college has been established in 1953 with facility to study Arts. Science and Commerce up to Degree standard. Katihar Technical School has recently been shifted to Katihar from Dighi (as it is said, it could not get accommodation formerly at Katihar) and a big building has been constructed. There is one Arabic college and a Sanskrit college at Katihar.

In 1955 Katihar subdivision was made with its headquarters in Mirchaibari area, which is rapidly increasing in population. After partition of the country, Bihar had to guard a long Pakistan

border. The VIIth Battalion of Bihar Military Police was located in the north of the town on the side of Purnea Katihar Road. They are using the "Rifle-Range" of *Chandmari* constructed by the British Government for the Anglo-Indian Volunteer Corps.

There are two Government hospitals, one civil hospital with 15 beds and another railway hospital. A Government hospital with 70 beds at the present site of the hospital is under construction. There are other three dispensaries, one belonging to State Insurance Scheme in industrial area and another opened by the Ram Krishna Mission and the third one of Bihar Military Police. The Ram Krishna Mission established in 1926 at Katihar, is a big institution, with a big High school, library, Allopathic and Homoeopathic dispensaries and a temple where religious discourses are held. The main aim of this institution is "Service to the People".

Katihar has a Sports Association and is a centre of football and other games.

The Town Club of Katihar (established in 1936 by a few sport enthusiasts) had its own building in 1938. The two Railway Institutes for the railway employees have a library, a reading room, a theatrical stage with an auditorium and a park adjoining to it. The "*Kalibari*" of Katihar was constructed in the middle of 19th century, by Raja Mahendra Narayan Roy of Souria, a place seven miles to the north-east, where the relics of Souria can be seen. Raja Mahendra Narayan Roy separated from the family and built his house "Rajbati" at Katihar and established the "*Kalibari*". The town is being rapidly extended, the railway area on the west of the railway lines has added, many bungalows and quarters extending over miles. A Kosi colony is coming up to the west of the town. There is an Inspection Bungalow in the heart of the town. There are two *dharmsalas* for travellers. Katihar has four cinematograph houses.

There are two C. D. Blocks, Katihar North and Katihar South functioning here. The Government of Bihar have recently supplied electric energy to this town, Purnea and other places from a power house installed at Katihar. The Water-Supply Scheme of Rs. 9,76,000 for Katihar Municipality constructed by the help of Public Health Engineering Department of the Government of Bihar is completed. The water tower with a tank of 1,00,000 gallons capacity on it has indeed, added to the architectural glory of the town. The railway area is now getting water-supply from the river Kali Kosi. Indeed,

this water-supply is a big one. It is said to be capable of supplying water to a town double the size of Katihar. Of course, formerly these areas were supplied from three tube-wells which were working unsuccessfully. Railway waterworks colony has a pleasant townscape quite distinct for the congested *bazar* area. The Agricultural Departments of the Government of India and Government of Bihar have opened agricultural farms for the improvement of jute and other cultivation on the south end of the town.

The town, though improved in some respects has still the slums of olden days. Slum areas are interspersed with palatial buildings and unhealthy marshy lands. The slums are often destroyed by fire in the dry months. Katihar has had an oblique development and the housing problem has become very acute. Housing schemes for low-income and middle-income group have not yet been implemented. Katihar lacks a townscape badly.

Katihar Subdivision.—In 1955, Katihar subdivision was created out of Purnea Sadar subdivision with its headquarters at Mirchaibari on the outskirts of Katihar town. There was a Civil Court at Katihar from before. Most of the Government offices including the Civil Court buildings were constructed at Mirchaibari where a new township has grown up. • For better administration it was felt that there should be another subdivision. It was difficult for the Sadar Subdivisional Officer to look after such a big subdivision.

The subdivision has an area of 1,266 square miles. The population of Katihar subdivision according to 1951 census was 8,91,331. According to the provisional figure of 1961 census the population is 9,06,526.

Katihar subdivision has the following revenue *thanas*:— Katihar, Korha and Kadwa.

The following are the police *thanas* in Katihar subdivision with their area and population according to the 1951 census:—

Name of thana.	Area in sq miles.	Population.
Katihar	191	1,47,731
Manihari	165	1,01,424
Korha	223	1,01,592
Baisi	198	93,133
Kadwa	133	76,045
Barari	134	71,408
Azamnagar	136	72,584

Katihar subdivision has got only one town, viz., Katihar according to 1901 to 1961 census. The population of Katihar town in 1901 was 9,761. In 1951, the population had risen to 42,365. There has been a steady increase till 1941 when the population was 26,326. In the next decade there was a great rise to 42,365 which synchronised with the rapid industrialisation of the town. Katihar is now an industrial town with all its advantages and disadvantages. Jute mills and other industrial concerns have changed the face of the town.

Katihar subdivision has got important trade centres at Katihar, Manihari and Barari. These trade centres have been discussed in a separate chapter. The importance of Katihar town as a trade centre or a railway junction has been discussed elsewhere.

The Subdivisional Officer, Katihar, is the head of the civil administration of the subdivision under the administrative control of the District Magistrate of Purnea There are a number of offices at Katihar subdivision for magisterial and revenue work and he has the further assistance of officers in charge of departments like Excise, Registration, Medical and Public Health, Agriculture, Public Works Department, etc.

Katihar subdivision has among others the following officers — Assistant Engineer, National Extension Service, Assistant Engineer, Irrigation, Subdivisional Educational Officer, Subdivisional Agricultural Officer, Subdivisional Officer, P W D, Assistant Registrar, Co-operative, Inspector of Industries, Inspector of Central Excise, Commandant, one contingent of Bihar Military Police.

For development and revenue purposes the subdivision is further divided into two C. D. Blocks—Katihar North and Katihar South functioning here.

The following blocks are located in Katihar subdivision — Katihar Development Block, Barari Development Block, Kadwa Development Block, Baisi Development Block and Azamnagar Development Block.

Katihar is the district headquarters for the North Eastern and North East Frontier Railways and a large railway colony is located here. There are a large number of railway officials and a still larger number of subordinate railway staff posted at Katihar.

The population of the subdivision consists of both Hindus and Muslims as the two major communities. The subdivision

has the advantage of a long water board, fertile land and good crops and fairly good communication facilities.

Khagra.—Khagra, a part of Kishanganj town, is under the jurisdiction of Kishanganj *thana*. It has an area of 1,832 acres having 201 houses. The population according to the census of 1951, is 1,037, i.e., 647 males and 390 females. About 300 males and 72 females are literate and there is only one Lower Primary school. Its *thana* number is 144 and people of this place are mostly engaged in cultivation, other services and miscellaneous sources.

Khagra is commonly known as the Khagra Nawab's Estate. Its sole proprietor was Nawab Syed Ata Hussain Khan, who died in 1892. He was survived by his widow, Nawab Sahar Banu Begum Sahiba and two sons, namely, Nawabzada Syed Mehiuddin Hossain Meerza Saheb and Nawabzada Syed Moinuddin Hossain Mirza Saheb and one daughter, namely, Nawabzadi Zain-un-Nissa Begum Sahiba. Soon after the death of the Nawab, the Begum's brother, Prince Syed Iskandar Ali Meerza came to Khagra from Murshidabad and took his sister and her three minor children with him to Murshidabad Then the Nawab's estate was looked after by the Court of Wards. At Murshidabad the two sons of the late Nawab were educated by a tutor, Meerza Sujjat Ali Beg. The daughter died in her childhood. Then her mother inherited the entire share of her daughter in the State. After the death of Prince Syed Iskandar Ali Meerza the widow Begum Sahiba married Meerza Sujjat Ali Beg (the private tutor of her minor sons) Later on this tutor was given the title of Khan Bahadur by the British Government.

This estate was divided among all the sons and daughters of the Begum from the first and second marriages. Not only this, but some share went to the children of Meerza Sujjat Ali Beg from his first wife In the year 1906 Nawabzada Syed Mehiuddin Hossain Mirza attained his majority and the Court of Wards ceased to function thereafter. He married one European lady. He had a daughter named Sahebzadi Akhtar Banu Begum born at Calcutta in 1907. Nawab Mehiuddin Hossain Mirza died in 1919 at Mussorie in U. P. Now litigation started between the younger brother of the deceased on the one hand and Mrs. Nora Frances Meerza and her daughter on the other in respect to inherit the share of the late Nawabzada. After sometimes they arrived at a compromise and Nawabzada had to pay Rs. 27,000 per year to Sahebzadi Miss Zeu Meerza but the successor of Nawabzada Syed Moinuddin Mirza became the sole proprietor of the Khagra Estate.

Khagra village is best known for a famous *mela* held every year in the cold weather. The old Gazetteer published in 1911, mentions that this *mela* was attended by 50,000 to 1,00,000 persons. The *mela* was introduced by the late Nawab Syed Ata Hossain Khan in the year 1883. The idea was suggested to him by a *faquir* known as Baba Kamli Shah, for the good of the people and for the improvement of the condition of the local people. This suggestion, when placed before the then District Magistrate of Purnea, namley, Mr. A. Weeks, received his support and the then Subdivisional Officer of Kishanganj, namely, Rai Bahadur Gossain Das Dutta, also supported the idea of the Nawab in sponsoring the *mela*. He constructed a *pucca* road from the old Khagra Dehori to the Ganga-Darjeeling Road. The Estate Manager of the Court of Wards, Mr. Tolts brought about many improvements in the *mela* by constructing metalled roads and digging wells at different places and planting shady trees.

Previously the shopkeepers from different places like Dacca, Murshidabad and other places of Bengal used to come here. Before the partition of India, this *mela* attracted a large number of people mostly Muslims from the areas which after partition of the country went over to Pakistan, especially the neighbouring districts falling in East Pakistan. A large number of elephants, bullocks, cows, buffaloes, Bhuttia ponies, country horses (Sareswal), sheep and goats, camels and dogs are sold. This *mela* was also notorious for women traffic and large number of up-country prostitutes used to visit the *mela*, but with the implementation of 'Immoral Traffic Act', the evil has been checked to a great extent, causing a great financial loss to the *mela* holders.

This *mela* came into management of the Revenue Department in the year 1953 after vesting of estates under provision of Bihar Land Reforms Act and following are the figures of income (yearwise) of the *mela* :—

	Rs.
1953-54	91,527
1954-55	89,690
1955-56	96,455
1956-57	1,27,618

The Government realised the income for the whole *mela* and paid compensation to the *raiyats* as decided. During the year 1957-58 the Khagra Nawab (ex-intermediary) claimed certain portion of the Khagra *mela* as their *Bakast* and homestead land for which injunctions were issued against the Government

to hold *mela* on those portions. During 1957-58 onward the *mela* is being held on original site by three parties, namely, State Government, the Khagra Nawabs and the *raiyats*. In the year 1959-60 some portions came into the possession of Government by virtue of the amendment of Bihar Land, Reforms Act and during 1959-60 the whole portions belonging to the State Government was settled with the Khagra Nawab on Rs. 25,212. During these years the State Government incurred expenditure up to 12 per cent to 15 per cent on the maintenance of the *mela* amenities such as latrines, sanitation, etc.

Litigations between the State of Bihar and ex-proprietors of Khagra Nawab Estate are going on.

Kishanganj.—Headquarters of the Kishanganj subdivision, situated on the Ganga-Darjeeling Road, a little distance east of the Mahananda river. Its population in 1901 was 7,671, 1911, 7,563, 1921, 7,934, 1931, 8,946, 1941, 10,424 and in 1951 was 15,908.

Its name was formerly Krishnagunj. It appears that during the time of Francis Buchanan (1810) it was a poor place though a native officer resided here. As he mentioned "Krishnagunj, where the native officers reside, is a poor place; but it is situated between two market places. The one to the west is by the natives called Line-bazar, as containing the military cantonment The officers' houses are all thatched, but are neat and comfortable. Besides the military there may be 500 houses. The market east from Krishnagunj is called Kutubgunj and is situated on the opposite side of the river* and contains about 600 houses".

It became the headquarters of the Kishanganj subdivision in 1845. The Subdivisional Magistrate's offices were situated four miles north-west of the present site, at a place known as Bhaliya-dangi, about half a mile from the east bank of the Mahananda, where there was also a *Munsif* or civil court, a sub-registry office, a school, and a charitable dispensary. The post office, coaching bungalow, and police-station were at Kishanganj. It formed a *chaukidari* union under Act XX of 1856, and was managed by a municipal committee of seventeen non-official native members.† Kishanganj was constituted a municipality in 1887. It is not known as to when the Subdivisional Officer's offices and the civil courts were shifted to present site. Mr. O'Malley had mentioned in the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911) that the offices had recently been removed to

*It is a small dead river called Ramjani.

†Hunters' Statistical Account of Purniah, p. 265.

Deomaria, a quarter of the town adjoining the railway station. So it is speculated that the offices were shifted to the present site between 1901 and 1911.

Formerly, a narrow gauge line known as the Darjeeling-Himalaya Railway used to run between Kishanganj and Siliguri. In 1941, the narrow gauge was converted to metre gauge from Kishanganj to Galgalia. In 1948-49, the entire narrow gauge was converted and then the entire length from Kishanganj to Siliguri was thus connected by metre gauge line. The distance of Kishanganj from Purnea by rail is about 80 miles whereas by road it is only 45 miles. So road journey is more favourable, as it is not only less expensive but saves a lot of time. But the un-bridged gap of the Ganga-Darjeeling Road on the river Mahananda stands in the way and especially in the rainy season it becomes difficult to go to Kishanganj from Purnea by road.

The town is a straggling one, the area within municipal limits being five square miles, but according to the recommendation of the Vishwanathan Commission, some villages adjoining the town have to be added and so its area would be about 11 square miles. It has now four wards, viz., (1) Kutubganj, (2) Kishanganj and Line Kishanganj, (3) Teghra, Sundarian, Dilwaiganj and Dharamganj, and (4) Dumaria, Ruidhasa and Khagra. The place has importance owing to the development of jute trade. There are three jute pressing mills and one oil mill. A large volume of jute is exported from here. Being situated in the centre of the famous Ganga-Darjeeling Road, the road traffic of Kishanganj is very heavy. The nationalised buses of West Bengal ply to and from between Kishanganj and Raiganj, Balurghat and Siliguri. Private buses ply to and from between Purnea and Kishanganj. Besides a large number of public carriers daily touch Kishanganj. There are the sub-offices of the Balurghat Transport Agency, Everest Roadways, Bharat Yatayat and Ashok Transport Agency at Kishanganj. There had been some set-backs in the jute trade of Kishanganj due to the transfer of some of the best jute growing areas of the Kishanganj subdivision to West Bengal.

Besides the Subdivisional Officer's offices there are the courts of Munsif-Magistrate, the office of the Deputy Superintendent of Police, Subdivisional Agricultural Office, Offices of the S. D. O. P. W. D., Assistant Registrar of Co-operative Societies, the Circle Office of the Superintendent of Central Excise and the office of the Assistant Superintendent of Commercial Taxes. It has two High schools, one for boys and the other for girls, one Middle

school, a library, post and telegraph office, police-station, dak and inspection bungalow and a railway station. It has also a sub-divisional hospital and a sub-jail.

A broad gauge line between Khajuria *ghat* and Siliguri via Kishanganj running parallel to the existing metre gauge line is under construction. It is expected by the end of 1961 this railway track will be completed and the bulk of passengers from Assam and North Bengal will take this route for going to Calcutta, as the distance between Calcutta and Siliguri will take much shorter time than at present. It will also facilitate easy movements of goods traffic between Assam and Calcutta. After the cession of a considerable area of Kishanganj subdivision to West Bengal, Kishanganj town is now virtually a pocket with Bengal borders on all the three sides on the north, east and south. This has crippled the business people to a considerable extent and they are in a great disadvantageous position. They have further been handicapped due to provisional restrictions on the movements of certain essential commodities between West Bengal and Bihar. It is also the headquarters of a Community Development Block. The Khagra *mela* is also located within the municipal area. A college has recently been started at Kishanganj up to Pre-University Course and in the near future it will develop into a full-fledged Degree College.

Kishanganj Subdivision—Physical Aspects—Location.—The subdivision Kishanganj has a total area of 782 square miles. It is bounded on the north by Nepal and West Bengal, on the east by State of West Bengal, on the south by Araria and Sadar subdivision on the west. The border of Pakistan is hardly 12 miles away from the border of this subdivision. The total population of this subdivision according to the census of 1951 was 5,60,503 having an area of 1,332 square miles but after the implementation of Transfer of Territories Act, 1956, the total population of the subdivision has been reduced to 3,30 760 with an area of 782 square miles.

Topography.—The greater part of this subdivision consists of alluvial plain and the whole subdivision is almost entirely a level plain. The whole plain of this area is drained by a number of rivers which emerge from the Himalayan ranges. During the rains they swell up and they flow swiftly but in dry season they dwindle into small streams.

Hill.—There is practically no hill in this subdivision and there is no waterfall worth mentioning.

River System.—The rivers take their origin in the high lands of Nepal, and Darjeeling district of West Bengal and flow from north to south. The important rivers of this subdivision are Mahananda, Donk, Kankai, Mechi and Ratua. Among them the Mahananda is most important.

The river Mahananda rises from the Mahalderan hill in the Darjeeling district and it enters the subdivision from north-east and flows southward. Near somewhere to the place it receives the river Kankai and thereafter it flows through the south-east of Purnea Sadar subdivision and enters Malda district of West Bengal. The Mahananda river has changed its course and old Mahananda has silted up at many places.

Big Boats ply during the rains on this river.

Donk.—It rises somewhere in the district of Jalpaiguri and flows close to Mahananda down to its junction with that river near Kharkhari.

Ramjan.—The river Ramjan which flows out the Kishanganj town appears now to have been dead

Kankai.—This river is furious and has got many branches in the northern portion of this subdivision. It changes its course very swiftly but brings sufficient silt. It has caused sufficient damage and people compare it with Kosi Ratua meets Kankai below Kuti..

Mechi.—The river Mechi brings too much sand and erodes its bank very swiftly.

All the rivers of this subdivision are hill streams coming from high range and they are liable to cause high floods during the rains. All these rivers remain in spate in August but water recedes very quickly. It is with the intention of checking their floods and utilising their waters for irrigation, that the river system of Mahananda and Kankai is being surveyed.

Climate.—The climate of Kishanganj subdivision is damp with an average rainfall of 77.11. The climate of this subdivision was formerly very damp and unhealthy, but since the earthquake of 1934, the climate has changed. Formerly, people of this part used to suffer from Kala-azar, malaria, etc., very frequently so that the people of other districts were afraid to come over this part.

The year can be divided into well marked seasons. The cold weather lasting from November to middle of March. Hot weather from mid-March to mid-June and rainy season from mid-June to October, generally rain ends in early October but some times monsoon continues till the end of this month.

July and August are months of heavy rains but they are fairly cool. During the months of April, May and June the climate is generally pleasing but the atmosphere becomes stuffy and uncomfortable at times.

Rainfall.—The subdivision receives more than 90 per cent of its total annual rainfall from the monsoon during the rainy season which lasts from the middle of June to October. During the months from November to October and May, fine dry weather prevails and only an inch or so of rain falls monthly. In normal years, the monsoons break in latter part of May and the heaviest rainfall occurs in July and August. The following table gives an idea of distribution of normal rainfall monthwise in the three rain recording stations of this subdivision:—

Station.	January.	February.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	September.	October.	November.	December.	Annual.
Kishanganj ..	.75"	.75"	.50"	2"	2.5"	12"	13"	25"	10"	3"	.50"	.25"	70.25"
Thakurganj ..	.85"	.85"	.75"	2.5"	3"	20"	21"	30"	15"	4"	.50"	·25"	98.70"
Bahadurganj	.25"	.50"	·25"	1"	1.5"	10"	11"	25"	10"	2"	.25"	.25"	62.00"

From the above data it can be safely inferred that the subdivision receives an average annual rainfall of 76.90 inches.

Fauna.—Tigers, leopards, buffaloes, deer, *nilgai* and wild pigs as well as some game birds were found in quite large number about 50 or 60 years ago, in the northern portion of the subdivision in the jungles on the bank of the river Mechi and Donk and it had the reputation of one of the best shooting places in Bihar. The fish-eating different rocodiles were found in nearly all rivers and running streams specially in the river Donk but due to change of river course and indiscriminate shooting, wild animals are getting scarce every year.

Besides, nearly all the jungles of the subdivisions have been cleared off and brought under cultivation. A small number of tigers and leopards, however, are still be met with. Leopards are seen by the roadside of Chopra and Sonapur on the National Highway.

Fish.—The river Mahananda contains *katla, Kalbaus, baai, tengra, bachua* and other small fish. *Hilsa* and *rahu* are very scarcely found in this river. The large tanks are stocked with *rahu* and *katla*, etc., but fish is not found in this subdivision in sufficient quantity.

General.—At present there are six poilce-stations, namely, Kishanganj, Bahadurganj, Terhagachh, Dighalbank, Thakurganj and Pothiya.

The subdivision being on the north-east corner of the State is close to East Pakistan which is at places only ten or twelve miles away from the borders of this subdivision.

The headquarters of the subdivision is Kishanganj town. It is divided into two halves by river Ramjan which remains dry for the most part of the year. This river is fed by rain water mostly and it works as the drain of the town.

Darjeeling-Ganga previously known as Darjeeling Ganges Road passes through the town. Across the Darjeeling Road on the south is Dumaria Mahalla of the town where all the Government offices are located. It has one Boys' High school, one Government Girls' Middle school, one High school for girls and several other Boys' and Girls' Middle and Primary schools. A Women's Industrial school is also functioning in Dumaria, giving training in knitting, embroidery and tailoring. There is a Government hospital.

Mohammadans predominate in Kishanganj subdivision forming about 80 per cent of the population. The majority are believed to be descendants of aboriginal *Kochas* or hill tribes. The other castes are Saik, Sadgope, Rajbansi, Musahar, Dhanuk, Gangai, Tanti, Hari, Teli, Dusadh, Saiyad, Jolha, Brahmin, Koiri, Bania and Santhal.

The Mohammadans and most of the Hindus speak dialect which is mixture of Bengali, Maithili and Hindi and commonly known as *Kishanganjia*. The area predominates in Muslim population but females do not observe *purdah* generally. The females do not wear *saris*. A cloth is tied tightly round the body passing just below the arms, which are left free and uncovered, while it forms a skirt which reaches up to the half of the leg. The cloth used is locally manufactured, dyed and the colours arranged in stripes are invariably in good taste. This apparel is known as *'Patni'*. The males generally wear *lungies*. Females are very fond of gold ornaments. There is quite a good business of gold at Kishanganj.

In this subdivision the houses generally are built of bamboo splits with straw roofing. Some of these houses display a great aesthetic sense and look attractive. Use of corrugated iron sheets for roofing is increasing day by day. People have also started constructing *pucca* houses in the mufussil areas as well.

The people are not very hardy. Most of their cultivation work is done by labourers. Their food is most un-nourishing. Their staple diet is rice, *dal* and vegetables. *Murhi* (fried rice), biscuits and tea constitute their favourite tiffin. It is because of their habit of taking biscuits and loaves there are several bakeries in this area The number of meat and beef eaters predominates. It is something very strange that more than 50 per cent persons of the community of Musahar and Dusadh who are all Harijans do not eat meat on principles. Use of *biri*, tobacco and *pan* or betel is very common. People are very fond of sweets.

Although nearly the entire population is dependent on agriculture and they are mostly farmers, they do not take to hard manual labour. Labourers from the west mostly, Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Balia districts come in several thousands to plough their land, sowing seeds and to harvest their crops. It is mainly a jute-growing area. During sowing and harvesting seasons special trains are run for farm labourers.

The people are *mela* minded. There are a number of mobile proprietors meant for exhibiting cinema shows in the *melas*. Purnea district as a whole is famous for numerous *hats* and *melas* in which the farmers participate There is hardly any part of Bihar, where so many *hats* and *melas* are held and patronised by the people. In these weekly *hats* or special *melas* consumers' goods and livestock are sold. It is peculiar that Purnea *melas* still attract a number of prostitutes who pitch their tents in the *melas* to carry on their trade. The Khagia *mela* is still the biggest *mela* in the district.

The weavers mainly weave 'Patani' on their primitive looms. In Kasera Mohalla of Kishanganj Town, bell-metal spoons are made. Chakia is famous as a cart wheel manufacturing centre which is of a very high grade and finds market throughout the district of Purnea. Bamboos, hides and bones abound in this area and they are exported to Calcutta to different manufacturing units. The Marwari community holds almost a monopoly over the jute trade, which is the chief product of this area. They are scattered far and wide in the most interior of the villages.

In this subdivision there is a very faint distinction between Hindus and Muslims. Here Hindus eat *pan* or drink tea freely from a Muslim shop. In Purnea there is '*Bhagwati Sthan*'

where Muslims also offer worship. Muslims freely offer goats, chickens, pigeons and the first fruits of trees and crops to Hindu deities. In Pachim Pali there is a *'Kali Sthan'* where both Hindus and Muslims perform *puja* and make offerings.

There is another custom which stands in striking contrast with those of the Hindus in the up-countries especially in Patna district. When a dead man is carried to the burning ghat, cow-dung mixed with water is sprinkled on the way, the liquid is carried in a *handi* (earthen pot) and after crossing the locality it is banged on the ground. At places, Hindus bury dead bodies like Muslims instead of burning the bodies.

On the whole the moral life of this subdivision is at a very low ebb. Although it is predominantly a rural area, from the moral point of view all the evils of a big industrial township are found here. There are three contributory factors for this low incidence—

(1) Prostitution in a very decentralised form is observed even in the most interior villages. (2) Institution of bigamy among the Mohammadans, (3) The free access of labourers from outside in the homes of the local cultivators.

Historic sites.—Some passages in the Mahabharata describing conquests of Bhima in eastern India, furnish further information about the inhabitants of this part (viz., northern part of Kishanganj subdivision) of this country. Bhima, it is said, conquered Maharaj king of Kanski-kocha and the land of the Pandras which is identifiable with South Purnea. He also defeated Karna, the king of Anga, conquered the hill-tribes, killed the king of Modagiri in battle and next subdued the powerful Pandra King, Basudeva, who is described as the King of Bangas, Pundras and Kiratas. Whole of Purnea district is said to have been under the king Pundra and the name Purnea was derived from the name of King Pundra.

Local tradition still speaks of the struggle and conquest of the Kiratas and a Kirata woman from the *morang* or *tarai* is said to have been the wife of Raja Birat who, it is said in the Mahabharata, gave shelter to Yudhishthira and his four Pandava brothers during their 12 years' exile. The site of this part is still pointed out at Thakurganj in the north of this district. A big pond which is called "Bhatdhola" to the west of Thakurganj just adjacent to the railway lines is still existing. People say that it was formerly used by Draupadi, the wife of Pancha Pandavas in cooking rice for the Pandavas.

It is said to have been the site of the residence of the Raja Virat whose territory lay along the east of Kosi and included the adjoining lands as far as Jalpaiguri, Rangpur and Dinajpur. At the time of last trigonometrical survey some stones with inscription were dug up at Thakurganj by the surveyors which the villagers declared were the remains of the Virat's palace.

"Kichaka-badh", an ancient place which is only 3 to 4 miles from Thakurganj lies in Morang just on the other side of the river Mechi. The brother-in-law of Virat Raja Kichaka was said to have resided at the palace of Virat Raja. A *mela* during *"Baruni Snan"* meets at this place every year when people of different villages assemble there for one day and offer homage to a fountain where it is said Kichaka was killed by Bhima. The small thin bricks and other materials were found lying here and there. In front of Kishanganj Subdivisional Officer's office there is a gun said to have been cast as a compact unit in honour of the visit of Sardar Baluman Yar Khan, a commander of five thousand soldiers and a younger brother of Saista Khan (1669). The cannon has not rusted although lying exposed for hundreds of years.

Benugarh, Asuragarh, Rajgarh are ancient historic sites although not much is known about them.

Kursela.—This village in Katihar subdivision is situated on the south-western part of the Purnea district, at a distance of 37 miles by bus route and 41 miles by rail route from Purnea. Different road routes radiate from this place to different directions, e.g., Kursela to Katihar, Kursela to Jogbani, Kursela to Dhamdaha. The village is near the National Highway Road which is under construction. Once a road bridge is constructed on Kosi river near Kursela, Purnea will be accessible by road from Patna. The railway station is named after the village.

Kursela is taken to be a distorted name of 'Kuru-Shila'. 'Kuru-Shila' means the hilly part of the region which once belonged to the King 'Kuru', the descendants of whom were called 'Kaurava' and according to Mahabharata waged a war with 'Pandavas', their cousins. At a distance of four miles south, there is a range of hills known as Bateswar hills. There is an ancient temple of Mahadeva on the hill. Some associate the once famous Vikramshila University with this site.

The village is situated at the confluence of Ganga and Kosi and is regarded as a very holy place for the Hindus. Thousands of pilgrims come to take a dip at the confluence.

The area adjacent to the railway line has developed into a good market place. This place is called "Ayodhaganj Market" after the founder of Kursela Estate. There is a good turnover of jute, tobacco, maize, fish, wheat and rice. The market is prosperous and has a large number of brick-built houses. All kinds of consumers' goods are available in the market. There is a fine temple of Ram and Sita and another of Durga.

At a distance of about three furlongs is the palatial building of the proprietor of the Kursela Estate on about 15 acres of land. It has its own electricity and an attractive garden. There is a separate guest house and the proprietor is well known for his hospitality.

Kursela has got a Higher Secondary school, a charitable dispensary, three libraries and a 'Gandhi Ghar' made out of the collection of Gandhi Memorial Fund, and this is a centre to help in the promotion of rural industries. The Higher Secondary school is Government aided but the dispensary called 'Dhanrakshini Dispensary' named after the wife of the founder of the Kursela Estate is run by the Kursela Estate. The village has got a landing ground for small planes maintained by the Kursela Estate. As the Kursela Estate has some private planes, the landing ground is in frequent use. The village has got beautiful mango orchards.

Kursela had a young artist, Sri Awadesh Kumar Singh, M. P , son of the present proprietor of the Kursela Estate, Sri Raghubansh Prasad Singh, whose paintings were exhibited at New Delhi, under the presidentship of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan He had an untimely death in 1958.

Lalbalu.—A wide stretch of maidan about 9 miles from Purnea to the east with a small *idgah* at one end and on which the devout Moslims assemble for saying their prayers. Lalbalu has her good old day of importance which is worth recounting.

Very few people know that it was at this maidan there was a fight between the mutineers and a band of loyalists led by Commissioner Yule of Bhagalpur in the Sepoy Mutiny days on the 11th of December, 1857. This encounter practically disbanded the insurrectionists so far as Purnea district was concerned. The bulk of the insurrectionists took to their eels and fled towards Morang in Nepal.

At the end of November, 1857 some companies of the 73rd Native Infantry broke out at Dacca and it was apprehended that they would come and inflame the troops at Jalpaiguri. A detachment of the 11th Irregular Cavalry was then posted at Jalpaiguri. Mr. Yule who was the Commissioner of Bhagalpur Division at

that time promptly left Bhagalpur with a detachment of the 5th Fusileers stationed at Monghyr. Mr. Yule marched on to Purnea by the track which later on was acquired and transformed into the famous Ganges—Darjeeling Road so well known to the motorists and joined Captain Burbank there. As a precautionary measure Captain Burbank had previously been despatched to Purnea with a small company of sailors. Mr. Yule infused spirit into the Europeans of the district mostly planters, drilled them into a small force and they all followed the Commissioner Yule who knew to wield the pen only.

The party led by Commissioner Yule marched from Purnea to Kishanganj. At Kishanganj came the news that detachments of the 11th Irregular Cavalry had mutinied. Mr. Yule promptly followed them up and came back to Purnea. On the 10th of December after an arduous all night march the mutineers retreated a few miles to the east and at night just when Yule and his men had sat down to dinner, the news was brought that the mutineers had camped at Lalbalu. At the dead of the night when preference might have been given to the bed, the small army was led out by Yule for that Ascalon. Just at dawn the party reached Lalbalu taking an angular direction from Pathalwah Kothi where an indigo planter lived. The mutineers were surprised at this intervention and before they could rise to the occasion, Mr. Yule had marshalled out his men into position. The fifty regulars mounted on the embankment (which still exists) and behind the *bundh* were ranged the men of the naval brigade and of the volunteer dragoons mixed with the Fusileers.

Then commenced the battle of Lalbalu also described as the battle of Bundh by Sir Edward Braddon in his almost forgotten '*Thirty Years of Shikar*'. Braddon was at that time a junior man in the Civil Service and followed his Commissioner from Dumka where he was posted as an Assistant Magistrate. Braddon was in this fight and from his sketchy description of this fight it appears that Yule was saved at the nick of time by a volunteer from being sabred. The mutineers were dispersed and fled towards Morang in Nepal. The path to Morang still exists. The site of this encounter at Lalbalu has a complete identity.

It is also interesting to find that the raising of Volunteers Corps by Mr. Yule ultimately led to a regular corps. On the 24th July 1858 there was a meeting at the Circuit House at Purnea to consider the terms on which the Europeans of the district would enrol themselves into a Volunteer Rifle Corps. It was at first proposed to describe the corps as Yule's Purnea Rifle Corps but the proposal fell through. Conditions were drawn

up and a regular corps was formed. The writer has got the names of the gentlemen present at the meeting. Mr. Alexander Yule informed Mr. Killwick of Nathpore and Mr. Decoursey of Lallpore, that the Government had sanctioned the raising of the corps and that the boat Luchman was bringing the arms and ammunitions to Karhagola. Sergeant Murray of the H. M. 10th Regiment was deputed to train up the enthusiasts and he was on duty at Purnea from October, 1858 to February, 1859. After his work at Purnea Sergeant Murray rejoined his regiment at Dinapore.

The fight at Lalbalu was practically forgotten and even the last District Gazetteer does not specify the place where the engagement took place on the 11th December 1857. Braddon's book also does not mention the site. The remains of the Pathalwah Kothi where the men of Yule had assembled are still to be seen and the old Nawabi *bundh* is still there to speak for Yule

Lalbalu grounds leapt into prominence again in 1934 when the Lady Houston Mount Everest Expedition came to Purnea The party was led by Lord Clydesdale, Col Etherton and Air Commodore Fellows. The expedition used Lalbalu ground as their base and from here the first air flight over Nepal took place in the course of which excellent photos were taken There could be no landing as there was no landing ground in Nepal at that time. As a matter of fact permission from Nepal Government was obtained with a certain amount of difficulty and this was possible only because the Viceroy took a good deal of interest in the matter and Col. Etherton who was an authority on Central Asian politics visited Nepal by land first. History was made from Lalbalu Grounds and the link of Nepal with India was strengthened by this expedition.

Lalbalu is now again just the grazing ground for the cattle and remains as one of the forgotten historical sites

Madanpore.—A village six miles north-east of Araria. There is a famous Shiva temple locally known as Madaneshwarnath. A big *mela* is held on the eve of *Shivaratri.*

Mamu Bhagina Ail.—This is described in the old Gazetteer as "An embankment which runs across country, near the south of *Pargana* Surjyapur in the Kishanganj subdivision, from Nekmard in Dinajpur. Legend relates that it was constructed by an uncle and his nephew, rival suitors for the hand of a lady, who lived at the village of Angorbasa. The suitors lived about 30 miles away in opposite directions, and to win the lady's favour, they each tried to erect a causeway so as to come to her house by

a road untrodden before by any feet. One form of the legend says that both arrived at the same time, having finished the roads by supernatural assistance in a single night; and the lady, unable to decide between them, committed suicide. Another, and a more likely version, is that the process of road making proved so slow that the lady got tired of waiting and when at last the uncle and nephew arrived, they were only in time to assist at the celebration of her nuptials with a third and more favoured suitor. There is a similar legend about a sort of embankment traceable at intervals on the left bank of the Mahananda between Titalya and Sonapur some 50 miles further north. A very conspicuous mound still exists there, which is said to have been the site of the lady's palace. Another story is that *Pargana* Surjyapur was enclosed on the north and south. Boundary of Suryapur, however, lies far south of the Mamu Bhagina Ail. The embankment bears a strong resemblance to Bir Bundh in North Bhagalpur, but its site and direction negative the idea that it was a defensive work against fluvial action, and more probably it was a line of defence against the hillmen*". A portion of this village stands transferred to West Bengal. The importance is gradually declining.

Manihari.—There is a mythological story that during the *Mahabharata* period, Lord Krishna had come to this place and he lost a *mani* (a valuable jewel). Due to this fact it came to be known as Maniharan which was changed into Manihari.

Regarding the location of this village, the old *District Gazetteer of Purnea*, 1911, by Mr. O'Malley, mentions, "A village in the south of the district situated in the south of the Purnea subdivision on the Ganges". There had since been fundamental changes. Since Katihar has been declared as a subdivision in 1955, this village has been included in Katihar subdivision. The course of the river Ganga has now changed. Previously this river used to flow very close to this village but now it has shifted to a distance of about 3 miles to the south. There is another river Chhota Kosi which is to the west of this village. To the east are the villages Baldiabari, Mednipore, etc., and to the north is village Baghmara. The police-station is of the same name and Manihari bears the *thana* number of 333.

The area of this village is 2,671 acres. It appears from the *District Census Handbook of Purnea*, 1951, that the total number of houses was 715 only but now there are 1,201 number of houses as per census, 1961. O'Malley had mentioned in his *District Gazetteer, Purnea*, 1911, that the total population was

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*J. Byrne's *Purnea Settlement Reports*, 1908.

3,759 as per census, 1901. The population in 1951 was 3,060 (1,530 males and 1,530 females). The population in 1961 must have multiplied. Manihari has become very important as the connecting link with one portion of Bihar on the other side of the Ganga and also as a link with portions of West Bengal after partition.

The natural division of this village is that there are *diara* lands (mainly Ganga silts or sands) and stable lands. To the south-east direction of this village there is a different kind of soil which is mixed with limestones (*gangat* soil).

The western portion of old Manihari has been eroded and washed away by the river Ganga. Till 1932—42, the river Ganga was flowing close to the present hospital. She is now 3 to 4 miles away from the hospital. Since 1942 the river began shifting. Manihari has never been affected by any flood caused by the two rivers, Ganga and Chhota Kosi because it is on a very high level. The western and the southern portion of old Manihari have been eroded. The soil is very good for cane cultivation The cane is used for making baskets. The urbanisation is demanding the area of cane cultivation The abundance of cane that could have been grown could be better organised

The climate is temperate and humid. There is less of humidity during March-April when the dry wind blows. Rainfall is approximately 40 inches annually. The climate is quite healthy and often people visit this place for a change.

There is one Shiva temple. The temple itself is not so old but the Shivalinga seems to be of antiquity. Dr. S. K. Chatterjee, a noted linguist-antiquarian and Ex-Speaker of West Bengal Assembly, had visited this temple in 1958. His opinion is understood to be that the Shivalinga is about a thousand years old. The *linga* has got two portions attached to each other—one is Shivalinga and the other is a female face, Goddess Parvati, attached to the middle portion of the Shivalinga. Previously this image was simply placed in a square room on the south-west corner side of the present temple. The temple is at present to the southern side of Manihari *thana*. About 50 years ago one Marwari constructed the present temple at his own cost and placed the image inside it.

The hillock of Pirpahar at Manihari has been covered elsewhere. To the lower portion of this hillock, there is a good quantity of multi-coloured chalk and the upper portion is chalk in making. There is a slab of black stone near the *dargah*

building, with an inscription and a portion of a lotus figure. One portion of the slab is said to have been taken away by an ex-*zamindar*. The other portion which is left bears a few lotus petals.

There is an old mosque which appears to have been constructed at least 300 years ago. It is situated to the south-western corner of this village on the bank of old river Ganga. It is said that Muslim pilgrims of Bengal, etc., used to go to Mecca via this route and this mosque used to serve as a *sarai* as well as for prayers.

At Manihari there are remains of indigo vats and building of indigo planters.

Manihari is now the headquarters of a block. With the fashioning of the block there has been an improvement in the cottage industries like pottery, basket-making, etc., in this area. Finds of old pottery show that coloured glazed pottery goods used to be produced in this area. Many diggings have brought out such old pieces of pottery which have not been investigated for their age. Poultry Farming and Animal Husbandry are attracting more attention. There is one Multi-purpose Co-operative Society and two Sugarcane Growers' Co-operative Societies. There is a library, Bharati Pustakalaya, with about 600 books and 45 members. The library is popular and organizes cultural programmes on important occasions. There is a branch of Mahila Samiti. The Bharat Sewak Samaj has a branch at Manihari and a medical centre from where free medicines are distributed.

There are two L. P. schools, one Higher Secondary school, one U. P. school and one *Maktab*. A large Harijan hostel is under construction. One Dr. S. C. Mukherji had sponsored a private hospital at Manihari in 1896 and after four years this private hospital was converted into the present District Board Hospital. There are six beds. There is one doctor with a small staff.

There is one Dak Bungalow consisting of two rooms.

The addition of a power house by N. F. Railway at Manihari has helped in organising the area although power is supplied only to the railway station at the moment. Electricity is, however, going to be supplied to the whole of railway colony which consists of about 300 hutments with a population of about two thousand persons. There is a separate power house at Manihari *Ghat* which shifts along with the *ghat*.

It is unfortunate that the area is still under a Union Board consisting of 11 members. The village cannot be said to be

very clean and there is no *pucca* road. The *kutcha* roads within the village and the important *kutcha* road connecting Manihari with Katihar are not well maintained. Previously there was a *pucca* road passing through the main *bazar*.

There is a daily market in the village. On every Thursday and Sunday a big *hat* is held. Local vegetables, fish and meat and other ordinary consumer goods are available. Manihari was once famous for palatable *rehu* fish and lobsters. Most of the fish that is caught is now sent away to Katihar or to Sahebganj or to Siliguri and very little is left for local consumption.

Regarding railway communication, Mr. L. S. S. O'Malley in the old *District Gazetteer* (1911) mentions:—

> "It is a terminus of the Bihar section of the Eastern Bengal State Railway, and is connected by a ferry steamer with East Indian Railway station at Sakrigali *Ghat*. It is also a place of call for river steamers."

The railway system covering this zone is now North East Frontier Railway which was a few years before called North Eastern Railway. The name of East Indian Railway has changed to Eastern Railway.

Manihari railway station is served by four passenger trains on each side, viz., two for Main lines, one for Katihar and the last for Radhikapore branches. For Jogbani, Dhubri, Radhikapore extra coaches are provided. Every train is connected with steamer. At Manihari *Ghat* and Manihari railway station there is one third class waiting hall. There are one upper class waiting room for ladies and gents each, two non-vegetarian and one vegetarian refreshment rooms, four sweetmeat stalls and the same number of the tea stalls at *ghat*. There are three platform tube-wells and two water trollies for providing drinking facility to the passengers.

There is a big railway colony having 300 huts where 2,000 railway employees reside. There is one railway hospital and one railway U. P. school.

This railway station has a great importance from commercial and religious point of view.

From the religious point of view, Mr. O'Malley in the old *Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911) had mentioned: "Large gatherings are held here on the occasion of solar or lunar eclipses, when people come even from Nepal to bathe in the river Ganges. A large fair is held here in connexion with the *Baruni-Ganga* festival (March—April) and there are smaller fairs on *Kartik Purnima* (November) and *Shivaratri* (February)."

This importance of Manihari has now disappeared because the river Ganga has shifted 3 to 4 miles away in southern direction. Still people pass from Manihari enroute to Manihari *Ghat*. Fairs and *melas* are held there.

From the trade point of view, Manihari *Ghat* station is of very great importance in Purnea district. This is quite evident from the table given below for the goods that are sent and received at Manihari *Ghat* and Manihari:—

Year	Goods received at Manihari *Ghat*, goods transhipment point from the north bank of the river Ganga.	Goods received at Manihari *Ghat*, goods transhipment point from the south bank of the river Ganga (Sakrigali *Ghat*)
	Mds.	Mds.
1957	37 60,532	95,06,664
1958	18 36,482	81,99,924
1959	27,97 356	50 46 144
1960	32 07,024	39,77,796

Purnea district is specially a jute-growing area. Hence, jute is sent outside this district to other State and in return rice, pulse, oil, wheat, etc., are imported in this district. The table shows that both ways goods received here in the year 1958 was the maximum and since then it is decreasing. In the year 1958 goods received from the north bank was the lowest and the goods from the south bank (Sakrigali *Ghat*) was lowest in the year 1960.

There is no goods booking office. Only small parcels are received and sent outside. The table given below shows the outward and inward parcel traffic that are sent outside and received here since 1955-56 to 1960-61 (till December 1960) :—

Year.	OUTWARD PARCEL TRAFFIC			INWARD PARCEL TRAFFIC			
	Maunds.	Amount.	Principal commodities.	Maunds.	Amount.	Principal commodities.	Sundry earning.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
		Rs.			Rs		Rs.
1955-56 ..	4,563	6,642	Fresh vegetables, biscuits and others.	625	899	Empty returned baskets, iron pipes, wooden doors, books, wooden package, empty gunny bags, ice, etc.	7,742
1956-57 ..	3,952	4,841	Fresh vegetables, fish, onions and others	322	455	Ditto and cloth, tarpaulin, tin *ghee*, etc.	2,005
1957-58 ..	2,235	3,087	Ditto.	154	339	Empty returned baskets dry chillies, forms and bundles, tin honey, etc.	2,820
1958-59 ..	1,932	4,716	Fresh fish, fresh vegetables, onions, biscuits, green chillies, tin biscuits, *biri*, baskets, etc.	580	1,384	Ice, dry chillies, drum oil, oranges, diesel oil, etc.	5,228
1959-60 ..	N. A.	N. A	N. A	N. A.	N. A.	N. A.	N. A.
1960-61 ..	37,957 Kg.	N A	N A	5,488 Kg	N. A.	N. A.	N. A.

N A —Not available

The goods of different varieties which are imported from the Eastern Railway are the following:—Rice, wheat, sugar, flour, salt, jagri, cement, miscellaneous goods, pulse, tea garden stores, fertilisers, potato, onion, etc.

The following goods are sent from N. E. F. Railway to Eastern Railway:—

Jute, oil-cakes, cane, rice, wheat, bran, cinchona, waste-wool, tobacco, etc.

As it is an important railway station and a steamer *ghat* on the sacred river Ganga, and as it is the only connecting link between Eastern Railway station and North East Frontier Railway of this district, a large number of passengers daily pass through this place. The average number of outward passengers is (*i*) Eastern Railway—200 per day, (*ii*) N. F. Railway—400 per day, and average number of inward passengers both from Eastern and N. F. Railways is 280 per day. The table given below shows the outward and inward passengers that pass through this place every year and every month:—

Year.	Months.	Number of outward passengers.	Number of inward passengers.
1955-56 ...	April	5,827	N. A.
	May	7,068	
	June	7,618	
	July	4,842	
	August	2,913	
	September ...	3,591	
	October ...	5,038	
	November ...	10,061	
	December ...	12,459	
	January ...	9,215	
	February ...	7,656	
	March	5,202	

Year.	Months.	Number of outward passengers.	Number of inward passengers.
1956-57 ...	April	7,823	
	May	5,917	
	June	4,582	
	July	3,504	
	August	3,452	
	September ...	3,054	
	October ...	5,581	N. A.
	November ...	7,280	
	December ...	11,671	
	January ...	5,092	
	February ...	8,777	
	March	7,489	
1957-58 ...	April	4,814	
	May	8,104	
	June	5,200	
	July	4,700	
	August... ...	3,235	
	September ...	3,749	N. A
	October ...	5,324	
	November ...	8,226	
	December ...	3.360	
	January ...	5,387	
	February ...	6,552	
	March	6,361	
1958-59 ...	April	6,056	
	May	6,062	
	June	5,314	
	July	4,518	
	August... ...	2,899	
	September ...	4,230	
	October ...	5,493	N A.
	November ...	7,167	
	December ...	4,585	
	January ...	5,872	
	February ...	7,357	
	March	7,262	

Year.	Months.	Number of outward passengers.	Number of inward passengers.
1959-60 ...	April	7,790	N. A.
	May	6,100	
	June	5,216	
	July	4,211	
	August... ...	3,635	
	September ...	3,467	
	October ...	4,650	
	November ...	7,231	
	December ...	5,296	
	January ...	7,458	
	February ...	13,528	
	March	11,389	
1960-61 ...	April	9,878	8,432
	May	7,583	9,463
	June	6,535	6,996
	July	3,327	5,283
	August ...	4,554	3,897
	September ...	4,619	7,711
	October ...	6,034	7,500
	November ...	3,331	10,395
	December ...	4,714	6,009

Generally figures in the months of November, December, February and March rise. This rise in figure of outward passengers is only due to *melas*. But figures in the years 1957-58, 1958-59 do not show any rise. It can be assumed that *melas* did not take place during these years. Again the figures in the months of February and March in 1959-60 show a good increase in the number of outward passengers.

The steamer *ghat* shifts from the place to another annually. Sometimes in a single year it shifts to nearabout 4 to 5 places. The table given below shows the shifting of the *ghat* from the year 1956 to 1960 (till November) :—

Shifting of the Ghat.

Year.	Months.	No. of shifting.	Name of place where shifted.
1956 ..	January ..	1	Tipchor.
	July	2	Kantakosh, Mednipore.
	November ..	1	Basantpore.
	December ..	1	Baidyanathpore.
1957 ..	July	1	Basantpore High Level
	November ..	1	Tipchor.
1958 ..	June .. .	1	Basantpore.
	August... ..	1	Mednipore.
	November ..	1	Tipchor.
	December ..	1	Kantakosh
1959 ..	March	1	Tipchor Low Level
	April	1	Tipchor High Level.
	June	2	Tipchor Downstream, Basantpore
	July	1	Basantpore Downstream.
	August.. ..	3	Mirzapore, Mirzapore High Level, Mednipore
	October ..	1	Basantpore
	November ..	2	Basantpore Low Level, Tipchor.
1960 ..	June	1	Intermediate Level at Basantpore
	July	2	Tipchor, Mednipore.
	October ..	1	Basantpore.
	November ..	1	Tipchor.

From 1956 to 1960 the *ghat* has shifted 27 times. This must have been done on a huge cost. Every year it must have been causing a great loss to the Government. The figure showing the shift of the *ghat* from one place to another in the year 1957 was the lowest and in 1959 was the highest. Only during 1959 it shifted eleven times.

On the whole it can be very well concluded that Manihari is developing very fast.

Mednipore.—It bears *thana* no. 24 in P.-S. Manihari and is situated at a distance of one mile from Manihari to the eastern direction and about half a mile south of the village Baldiabari.

A battle had taken place, between Nawab Siraj-ud-daula and Robert Clive in 1757 A. D. Siraj-ud-daula's camp was at Nawabganj and his commander was Mohan Lall. More than 200 of British soldiers were killed at village Baldiabari. The British Commander Clive tried to defeat Mohan Lall but the villagers of Mednipore helped Mohan Lall. The British Force had to retreat in the Raj Mahal hills across the river Ganga. The villagers of Mednipore were rewarded by an honourable title, 'Mowar', i.e., head man of this locality. This title was awarded by the Nawab. Descendants of Mowar dynasty are still found in this village.

There is one Upper Primary school, one *Maktab* and also a library. It appears from the *District Census Handbook of Purnea,* 1951, that the total population of this village is 2,043 (1,039 males and 1,004 females) and the number of literate males is 292 and females only 30. 40 per cent of the total population of this village are engaged in trade and commerce, 30 per cent in cultivation, 20 per cent labourers, 5 per cent service-holders and 5 per cent unemployed.

Morang or Murang.—An old name of the Nepal *Tarai* lying north of the district. The name is an old one, being mentioned more than once in the *Alamgirnamah* and in the annals of Koch Kings. It is shown in Van den Broucke's map as comprising the whole Himalayan tract from Bihar to Assam; and Jalpaiguri is entered under this name.

Morang is a district of Nepal whose headquarters is at Biratnagar. There is a metalled road from Jogbani of Purnea to Biratnagar of Nepal and regular bus services ply to and from Jogbani and Biratnagar. Biratnagar market is fed by the commodities despatched from Jogbani and other trade centres of

Purnea. Practically the trade of Biratnagar is in the hands of the Indian Marwaris and other businessmen. Indian coins are also in circulation there.

Nathpore.—This is on the north-western border of Araria subdivision. It was once the headquarters of the district of Purnea, with *pucca* buildings and all necessary paraphernalia of a district headquarters nearly 100 years ago. The place was ruined by the Kosi river and is now a small village with a few huts.

Nawabganj.—A village in the south of the Purnea subdivision situated 34 miles from Purnea town, and 12 miles from the banks of the Ganga, opposite Sahibganj. The local tradition regarding its foundation is that on one occasion a quantity of treasure, while being sent from Purnea to Rajmahal, the seat of Government in the later Musalman times, was plundered by a band of robbers near the site of the present village, which was then a waste jungle. The Nawab was unable to detect the robbers and, in order to protect the route, determined to establish a village on the spot A proclamation was made that any criminals who would settle and live there would be pardoned. People of this description took advantage of such a simple condition of amnesty, and flocked in from all quarters. The village grew in importance, and was called Nawabganj after its founder. There was a fort with an area of 80 acres. At Baldiabari about a mile and a half from Nawabganj, was fought the battle between Shaukat Jang and Siraj-ud-daula. Nawabganj is considered to include the village of Baghmara which lies a mile distant.

The walls of the fort have now completely disappeared. It is only after rainy season that big *sawai* grass grows round the fort which gives an impression of a fort wall. Half of the land of the fort has been donated for the construction of a High school

The *District Census Handbook of Purnea,* 1951, mentions the name of this village as Nawaganj. Its *thana* number is 294 and P.-S. is Manihari. The area of the village is 317 acres and the number of houses is 409. The total population is 2,864, i.e., 1,444 males and 1,420 females. The number of literate persons is 501 males and 59 females.

According to the census of 1961, the area of the village is 317.72 acres, and the number of houses is 547 but the population has decreased in comparison to the figure of 1951 census.

There are one L. P., one U. P., one U. P. Girls', and one M. E. schools. A building for a High school is under construction. Recently one attractive temple of Radha Krishna has been

constructed by a widow. Two weekly *hats* are held on every Friday and Tuesday.

Palasi.—Village Palasi is 48 miles north-east of Purnea town under the jurisdiction of Araria subdivision. It may be considered to be rather an inaccessible village because of the bad communication. A *katcha* road full of dust and pot holes runs from Araria to Palasi on which bullock-carts are the chief conveyances. The bullock-cart traffic on this road during fair weather season is very heavy. Due to the heavy bullock-cart traffic has made the road very bad. This village has a police-station of the same name and its *thana* number is 135.

The total area of this village is 1,700.23 acres and the total population according to 1961 census is 895, i.e., 441 males and 454 females.

There is a small river known as Marna. This river has water throughout the year but during rainy season it is flooded. This is a flood-afflicted village. The village is also liable to dust-storms in the summer.

It is said that when the Pandavas were in hiding this locality was visited by them. Under this P.-S. there is a place known as Jhunki. There is a huge mound of earth which is full of fire-clay. The mound has not been excavated.

Fish-rearing and poultry are subsidiary occupations. Beautiful jute *chattis* are prepared and are sold in the nearby *hatias* and *melas*. Cane grows extensively here. Cane-baskets are made. Marna river forms the main communication line in the rainy season.

A small *hat* consisting of two or three hawkers do take place on every Friday and Tuesday. A long *mela* is organised on the eve of Durga Puja and Kali Puja (Diwali). It lasts for a month. There are one shop for groceries, one cycle repair shop and one tea and betel shop.

One C. D. Block Office of the same name has been opened but it is still located at Araria. For the construction of Block Office building and quarters, about six acres of land have been acquired. There is a branch post office here.

There is one L. P. school. The incidence of literacy is very low. Only 107 males and 9 females are literate.

Pir Pahar.—The last *District Gazetteer of Purnea,* 1911, by Mr. L. S. S. O'Malley mentions this place as Chotapahar. But now this place is known as 'Pir Pahar'.

It is a small hillock about 250 ft. high to the north of Manihari railway station. This hillock contains multicoloured chalk. There is a *Pir Dargah* of an unknown Muslim saint. The last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* mentions that this *Dargah* was in ruins. But there has been a change now. The *Dargah* has a *pucca* building now. For a proper access stairs have been constructed very recently. The last *District Gazetteer* mentions that "It is probable that a Hindu temple formerly stood on or near the hill as some carved slabs or black stone have been found near it".

Powakhali.—This lies in Thakurganj *Anchal.* This is another market and a *hat* of this subdivision. There are one District Board hospital and one Dak Bungalow at this place. There is one Deputy Superintendent with four Inspectors of Central Excise Department. This place is famous for tobacco product.

Purnea.—Purnea, the headquarters of the district, is situated on the bank of the Saora river. The earliest records of the district had been lost, and the exact date on which the town was formally declared to be the headquarters station cannot now be determined, but it seems to have been somewhere about 1771* Even before the British occupation of the district, Purnea was the headquarters of the Muhammadan Governors, but little trace of their rule is now left beyond ruins of old houses and mosques, and place-names of some localities in the town The *Riyazu-s Salatin* also mentions a fort and a masonry building called the Lalbagh, as in existence in 1788†.

Dr. Buchanan Hamilton's description of Purnea had been referred in W. W. Hunter's *A Statistical Account of Bengal* (Vol. XV, published in 1877, p. 256) as follows:—

> "He states that the *daroga* or head constable of the town calculated that it contained 8,234 houses and 32,100 people, but of these 2,698 houses and 9,951 people belonged to villages situated entirely in the country, leaving 5,536 houses and 22,149 people for the town, which then occupied at least nine square miles'. Dr. Buchanan Hamilton adds 'I am apt to think population, but however that may be, we

**A Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol. XV by W. Hunter, 1877, p. 256.

†*District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1911), p. 198.

must form no idea of the population of Indian towns by comparing them with the extent of cities in Europe. This town, which occupies a space equal to more than half of London, most assuredly does not contain 50,000 people, although it is one of the best country towns in Bengal'."

Hunter further mentions "Since that time there seems to have been a very great decline in the population. The areas for which at the present day we have accurate census information differ very much from those of Purniah town in Dr. Buchanan Hamilton's time. Still, a fair comparison may be made. The old town area remains intact, measuring three miles and a half long by one wide. The old civil station of Rambagh, formerly a western suburb, now lies in the centre of the municipality. The large suburbs towards the north—Miyabazar, Khalifa Chak, and part of Abdullanagar, and on the east, Begum-deuri, parts of Lalbagh and Khushkibagh* have been lost, but the still larger space included in the new civil station Madhubani, Khazanchi Hat, Kaliaganj, Raghunathpur, and Walitola—has been added The area is now not less than 15 square miles In 1869, the Experimental Census disclosed the following results:—

Number of houses, 7,572; population, males 5,836, females 5,272—total, 11,108; average number of souls per house, 1 47.

The Regular Census of 187? however, showed a considerably larger population. The results then ascertained were as follows:—Hindus—males 6,004, females 3,641; total, 9,645 Muhammadans—males 3,551, females 2,634; total, 6,185. Christians—males 122, females 105; total, 227. Total of all denominations—males 9,677, females 6,380 Grand total 16,057.

"This marked decrease in the last half century is probably due to the unhealthiness of the climate, consequent on the silting up and stagnation of the iver Kali Kusi.'

O'Malley in 1911 found a somewhat different Purnea town and mentions: "The limits of the area now within municipal limit differ very much from those of Purnea town in Dr. Buchanan Hamilton's time. Still a fair comparison may be made. The old town area remains intact, measuring 3½ miles

*These place-names indicate Muslim influence. (P. C. R. C.).

in length by one mile in width. The old Civil Station of Rambagh, formerly a western suburb, now lies in the centre of the municipality. The large suburbs towards the north, viz., Miyabazar, Khalifa Chauk, and part of the Abdullanagar, and, on the east, Begam Deuri, parts of Lalbagh, and Khuskibagh have been lost; but the still larger space included in the new civil station, including Madhubani, Khazanchi Hat, Kaliganj, Raghunathpur, Walitola and Bhatta, has been added. The area within municipal limits is now not less than 12½ square miles. The population was 14,007 in 1901, but it has steadily decreased since 1872 when it was 16,057.

"The decline of the town within the last century is attributed to the unhealthiness of the climate, due to the formation of the Saura marshes and to the silting up and stagnation of the river Kala Kosi. Purnea seems to have been chosen as the seat of the Muhammadan Government of the district at a time when this river was the main channel of the Kosi. As the Kosi worked westward, it gave place to a chain of marshes separated by low strips of land, but flooded in the rains and forming at that season a continuous waterway. About the time of the English occupation, this change seems to have been going on, but was not yet complete. The main stream had been diverted, but enough still remained in the Kala Kosi to keep deep water in the swamps, which consequently did not shelter malaria bearing mosquitoes as shallow lands do. The Saura also was a larger river than it is at the present day, and the old records, while occasionally mentioning epidemics in the low tract to the south and east, make no reference to the headquarters town as being remarkably unhealthy.

"The space between these two rivers, which was known as Rambagh, although not so high as the country further to the west, where the military lines stood, was chosen as the civil station on account of its proximity to the native town, which then lay entirely to the east of the Saura. A more unfortunate choice could scarcely have been made. By 1815 the civil station had become so unhealthy that the Government considered that the removal of the headquarters to some other place was unavoidable, the acting Magistrate recommended that it should be located at Jalalgarh. Nothing, however, appears to have been done, and the station became more and more unhealthy. A road from the military lines to the civil station, in which sufficient waterway was not allowed, prevented drainage, and added to the prevailing malaria. The old graveyard, situated in one of the gloomiest

spots in the neighbourhood, on a narrow tongue of land surrounded by perennial swamps, shows how great must have been the mortality of the European residents during the second quarter of the century*.

"About 1835 it was determined to remove the Government offices to the higher country towards the west; and a site was chosen nearly two miles beyond the military lines, which had themselves shared to some extent in the general unhealthiness. After this change there was an appreciable improvement in the health of the officials and other residents, but Purnea long continued a very unpopular station. It still has a season of unhealthiness for Europeans, in the months of September and October, at the close of the rains when but all acclimatized residents are liable to attacks of fever. The native town of Purnea, which has remained in its old position is still more subject to outbreaks of fever, which pass into severe epidemics. The Saura marshes still remain undrained. An embankment has been constructed to resist floods in the Kala Kosi and Saura, but it also acts as a barrier to surface drainage into both these rivers. Moreover, while it is valuable in withstanding serious inundations, its construction is not sufficiently solid to prevent subsoil percolation. The marshes are in this way fed at all seasons and continue to be sources of malarial disease.

"The town is long and straggling, and contains five distinct localities, viz., the town proper, the civil station, Khazanchi Hat, Bhatta and Madhubani. The old town is situated on the left bank of the river Saura and is connected with the civil station by a small bridge built by Babu Manesh Lal and Babu Nackched Lal, bankers and merchants of Purnea. From it a road runs for about two miles south to Khazanchi Hat, a quarter which is chiefly inhabited by Muhammadans. To the south it is conterminous with Bhatta, which is inhabited by Bengali Pleaders, clerks and well-to-do Biharis. To the west, beyond the Darjeeling Road, is Madhubani with a small *bazar* and a municipal market. A beautiful view of the Himalayas on the distant horizon may be obtained from Purnea. The panorama is described as being exceedingly fine, and it is said that, though the view is inferior to that obtained at Darjeeling, the breadth of the range visible from Purnea is greater.

"The buildings of Purnea are of little interest. It contains the usual public offices of a district headquarters, a large dispensary, a Lady Dufferin Hospital, a High school and two churches.

*The graveyard still exists (P. C. R. C.).

The most curious fact connected with the town is that it has four Christian cemeteries, the Roman and English churches each having two. Two are in the former civil lines, and two in the present station. None of them contain monuments of conspicuous interest."

Since O'Malley wrote Purnea has had a lot of changes. The great Earthquake of 1934 affected the town but not as ruthlessly as some of the other towns of North Bihar. One good result of the earthquake was a new look to the Government buildings that had to be reconstructed or had to be built anew. A geological survey party had gone into the problem of the earthquake in North Bihar districts and had given certain prescriptions for houses in North Bihar to stand the ravages of earthquake. Since then there has been a good deal of research in engineering problems and the present day Government buildings in Purnea are modern and spacious. Some of these buildings are the Civil and Criminal Courts, Zillah school and the buildings of Kosi Project. Expansion of administrative departments has led to the siting of a large number of Government offices at district level. Some of them have got their own buildings while others are located in rented houses. As a matter of fact housing has already become a keen problem in Purnea.

Purnea still remains the only headquarters in Bihar where there are still wide stretches of open land for possible expansion. The old Collector's residence which is now used as the Circuit House, once commanded an uninterrupted view of green fields stretching for miles and miles. In spite of the Kosi Department colony having grown up on one side of the Circuit House, there is still a wide view of fields and mango groves from the other side of the Circuit House. The town has become much more congested in the last few decades but there are still many houses with quite a few bighas of land as their compound. There is now a bigger market for grains, jute and consumer goods. The different localities of the town like Bhatta, Madhubani and Line Bazar have had the addition of a very large number of buildings. A recent feature has been the rapid growth of the Gulabbagh market on Kishanganj Road. Sponsored by Raja P. C. Lall of Nazargunge, Gulabbagh market in the district has a big jute market. A big *mela* is held at Gulabbagh every year.

While a large number of Government and residential buildings of modern type have been built, there are still hundreds of thatched houses in Purnea town. As a matter of fact in each of the residential mohallas there are more of such thatched houses

than *pucca* houses. Purnea city has declined in importance with the growth of Purnea town proper. In O'Malley's time Purnea city was a much more important market.

The town is now well connected by rail, road and air. It is served by two railway stations, namely, Purnea City on Jogbani line and Purnea Court on Purnea Court to Murliganj section. Recently a large number of passenger buses have been running through Purnea and have connected the town with places like Kursela, Katihar, Jogbani, Kishanganj, etc. There is an aerodrome now for smaller air-crafts. The main roads in the town are now metalled and tar-macadamized. Three decades back there were thick lantana jungles on either side of the main road where even leopards could conceal themselves. The jungles have since been removed and the roads have been widened. The mohallas, however, still remain quite at a distance from each other and the conveyance charges are quite high in Purnea in comparison to the charges in other towns of Bihar. The conveyance vehicles are passenger buses, rickshaws and a light single horse-drawn vehicle known as *shampani*. *Shampanis* are not to be seen anywhere else in Bihar. The familiar *ekkas* of other parts of Bihar are totally absent in Purnea town. Bullock-drawn roofed vehicles are still there although their number is declining. There are now quite a number of private cars but there are no taxies available.

Regarding accommodation for the travellers there are a Circuit House, a combined Inspection and Dak Bungalow and *dharmashalas**. There are also a number of cheap roadside eating houses and tea shops which offer temporary accommodation. It is understood daily at least 1,000 full meals are served at these roadside restaurants mostly to the litigant public and others who come to Purnea for any other work for the day.

The State hospital has been expanded. There is a private Nursing-Home by the side of the hospital. A State library and an institution known as Kala Bhavan are coming up now for developing study, music and other arts There are a number of High, Middle and Primary schools for boys and girls. A Degree college is now functioning. There is a branch of Sarvodaya Ashram where handicrafts are encouraged. There is a local Ramkrishna Mandir where *kirtans* are held. The Station Club of Purnea is an old institution and is very popular with the elite of the town. There are two cinema houses in the town which are quite popular.

*The Inspection Bungalow has a Khansamah who served for over sixty years as such and is a real old-timer (P. C. R. C.).

The following chart will show the variation of population in Purnea town from 1901 to 1951:—

Town.	Persons.	Variation.	Net variation. 1901—1951.	Males.	Variation.	Females.	Variation.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Purnea.							
1901	14,007	..	.	8,271	..	5,736	..
1911 ..	14,784	+777	..	8,725	+454	6,059	+323
1921 ..	14,102	—682	.	8,061	664	6,041	—18
1931 ..	15,474	+1,372	.	9,255	+1,194	6,219	+178
1941 .	19,036	+3,562	..	11,424	+2,169	7,612	+1,393
1951	25,060	+6,024	+11,053	14,542	+3,118	10,518	+2,906

Purnea Sadar Subdivision.—Purnea Sadar subdivision comprises an area of 1,285 sq miles The population of the Sadar subdivision according to the 1951 census was 6,85,744 According to the provisional figure of 1961 census the population is 9,39,832.

Purnea Sadar subdivision naturally figured very prominently when the British Administration was stabilised in the district The Committee of Circuit was established under Resolution of the Comptrolling Committee of Revenue, dated 14th May, 1772, for concluding the settlement of the districts to the eastward of the Ganges after visiting the headquarters of each district. In view of the proximity to Calcutta the districts of Hooghly, Hijli, Calcutta *Parganas,* Burdwan, Midnapore, Birbhum, Vishnupur and Pachete were excluded from local inspection of Committee of Circuit, the settlement being concluded by the remaining members of the Board. The Committee consisted of the Hon'ble Warren Hastings as President and Messrs. Middleton. Dacres, Lawrell and Graham as members. From Dinajpur where the Committee had worked from the 2nd to the 26th January, 1773, the Committee proceeded to Purnea and concluded the settlement of that district between the 2nd and 9th February. The Committee's business terminated at Rajmahal where the Committee concluded the settlement of Rajmahal and Bhagalpur between the 15th and 18th February, 1773. Anyone anxious to delve into research in the early history of Purnea district will

do well to go through the consultations of the Committee at Purnea Circuit. Some of the consultations of the Committee of Circuit at Purnea in 1772 will give some of the reasons as to why there are, still such vast patches of uninhabited lands in Sadar subdivision. The early British Administrators were dead keen to fix a big revenue and to realise it to the last pie. Even wholesale emigration from an area to escape the higher rentals was not unknown. The depredations of the *fakirs* known as *sanyasis* were quite common and military detachments used to be sent to suppress the depredations of *sanyasis*. The exactions of the landlords had also occasionally led to mass evacuation from villages.

The Sadar subdivision has the following revenue *thanas*:—

Purnea, Amour and Dhamdaha.

The following are the police *thanas* in Sadar subdivision with their area and population according to the 1951 census.—

Name of thana	Area in sq. mile	Population.
Purnea	224	1,18,278
Kasba	192	49,601
Khazanchi *hat*	66	19,620
Amour	175	1,01,786
Baisi	104	64,640
Dhamdaha	244	1,33,942
Rupauli	147	1,02,492
Dharhara	133	95,385

The Purnea Sadar subdivision had only one town according to the 1951 census, *viz*., Purnea town with 25,060 souls

According to 1961 census operations the Purnea Sadar subdivision has the following towns *viz*.—

Purnea, Banmankhi Bazar and Kasba with 6,976 and 13,042 souls respectively. The latter two have been declared as towns in 1961 census.

There was a change as to the connotation of the town as given in 1961 census and the following criteria were imposed for the conception of a town. A place had to fulfil the following conditions in order to be treated as town.—

(*a*) Population of more than 5,000; (*b*) Density more than 1,000 persons per sq. mile; and (*c*) At least 75 per cent of adult male population engaged in non-agricultural occupation.

It has to be recalled that Purnea district previously had only three subdivisions, viz., Purnea Sadar, Kishanganj and Araria. In 1955 Katihar subdivision was carved out of the Sadar subdivision. Katihar subdivision was made up of eight *thanas* and a population of 8,91,331. Owing to the want of good roads the administrative authorities of Katihar have to visit Korha and Kursela *thanas* via Purnea town by roads.

Purnea Sadar subdivision has got important trade centres at Kasba, Purnea Sadar and Banmankhi. These trade centres have been covered in a separate chapter. There are also a large number of *hats* and *melas*, the most important of which are Gulabbagh and Kasba. This matter has already been covered in the text on Banking, Trade and Commerce.

The incidence of health in Sadar subdivision has remarkably improved since the great Earthquake of 1934. It is commonly believed that the choking of the wells and other water pools by sand which was thrown up through fissures had helped in improving the water. The largest hospital in the district is located in Purnea town.

The following blocks are located in Sadar subdivision:—

Purnea East Development Block, Kasba Development Block, Rupauli South Block, Banmankhi Development Block, Amour Development Block, Dhamdaha Development Block and Dharhara Development Block.

Some of the blocks have been specially covered elsewhere.

Raja Birat.—A place to the east of Manihari at a distance of 5 miles. This place is connected with the story of Raja Birat of the *Mahabharata* period who had kept a herd of cows at this place and had constructed a *bathan* (a small godown for grains with a cattle shed). There is one black-stone *Shivalinga* about 5 ft. in length and 3 ft. in breadth lying in an open field which is said to be of Raja Birat's time.

This place offers good pasturage.

Raniganj.—Raniganj is a roadside village under the jurisdiction of Araria subdivision lying at a distance of 28 miles from Purnea via village Sarsi. Via Forbesganj it is at a distance of 62 miles by road. This village has no access through rail.

Raniganj has grown out of three *mauzas*, i.e., Raniganj, Barbana and Hasanpur. The total area including all the three *mauzas* is 7,114.40 acres. Their *thana* numbers are 69, 65 and 78 respectively.

Its post office is known as Maryganj It was given the name Maryganj because when a letter was addressed to P. O. Raniganj it was sent to Raniganj in Burdwan district of West Bengal. Hence, the post office's name was changed to Maryganj after the name of an English lady who had a benevolent character and used to live here.

The Earthquake of 1934 had a good effect on the climate of this place. The incidence of malaria has gone down but the fertility of the soil was affected.

This place was once full of forests but the forests were cut. The Forest Department has now taken up afforestation and has planted bamboo, *babul, sisam,* silk-cotton (*semal*), cashew nut, *sirish* trees, etc.

Its total population in 1951 was 4,865, i.e., 2,571 males and 2,245 females but according to 1951 census the total population shot up to 7,169, i.e., 3,924 males and 3,245 females. This increase in population is because of the opening of the two Block Offices, Subdivisional Office of the Kosi Project, etc.

There are two temples and one mosque. There are two *Jatra* parties and one recreation club

Fifty per cent of the total population are agriculturists, 20 per cent businessmen, 20 per cent landless labourers, 5 per cent service-holders and 5 per cent unemployed.

Sheep-breeding is popular among *garens* who reside at old Raniganj village. They make rough blankets and sell them. Poultry farming is quite common now. There are *Bahardars* or fishermen who rear fish in local tanks and bring fish from the river Kosi which is now 50 miles away.

There are two flour and rice *chakkis* run by diesel oil. *Garens* and *Jolahas* prepare blankets and towels (*gamchha*) respectively. There are a few Doms and Dhangars who prepare bamboo baskets.

There is a savings bank in the Post Office. There is a Co-operative Society. There is one Insurance Inspector here and several villagers have been insured.

A century ago, Raniganj was the centre of trade and commerce. The main trade route was the river Kosi. There used to be transactions with Patna and Calcutta by the river and with Nepal by road. But with the shifting of the river Kosi, and the opening of railways from Katihar to Jogbani, the commercial importance of Raniganj has been affected.

There are two regulated markets, where both retail and wholesale business take place. Two *hats* are organised on every Tuesday and Friday. A sort of daily *hat* is also organised which is locally known as *Gudari Bazar*. This *bezar* also sits on the same spot where the two weekly *hatias* take place. There are four fair price shops.

The old communications were the river Kosi and *katcha* roads. Now the river has shifted, so water communication has lost its importance. Kursela-Jogbani Road passes through this village. This road is a *pucca* one One *katcha* road runs from Raniganj to Araria Even the condition of the *pucca* road is not so good because several diversions and bridges are still to be completed If Raniganj Araria Road becomes *pucca* one, people will be much benefited.

There is an old '*Nachghar* lying in ruins which used to serve the purpose of a rest-house Now there are one Dak Bungalow, four hotels, a good number of *Halwai* shops, eight tea stalls, betel shops, cloth shops, etc

In the old manuscript *District Gazetteer of Araria* (1874) by Mr. Haldane Rattary preserved in the Office of the S D O, Araria, there is mention of a municipality at Raniganj Mr. Hunter also mentions it in his report of 1877 but Mr. O'Malley in the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea,* 1911, says that there was a municipality here but it had ceased to function before 1911 A Union Board was existing here but it was abolished in 1956 when a *Gram Panchayat* was established in the same year (1956)

There are two block offices, one police-station, Office of the Central Excise, Subdivisional Office of the Kosi Project, one veterinary hospital and one medical hospital There is a malaria centre also which was established in 1930. There is a Labour Welfare Centre Office.

There are one High school, one girls' U P school, two boys' U. P schools and one night school for Harijans There are two libraries—one for Bengali books and the other for Hindi books*

It was an important trade centre about century before. As early as 1874, Mr. Haldane Rattray who was Deputy Magistrate of Araria had mentioned regarding Raniganj as follows*.—

"Headquarters of *thana* Raniganj, N. W. 29 miles from Purneah and W. S. W. 17 from H. Q on a high

*Unpublished Records called "Araria Gazetteer' preserved in archives of D. O.'s, Araria.

sandy plain between the Kamla and Kamtaha rivers. Population 1,499. A very well attended market is held on Thursday and Monday. The Raniganj township a municipality established in 1864 comprises the villages Baribana (part), Hasanpur, Indarpur, Raniganj, Barhana. The house-tax yields 950 a year and the expenditure, including the cost of 12 municipal committees comes up to 850. Sar Singh and some Bengalis have large *golas* here. They carry on brisk trade with Nepal and neighbouring country".

Regarding Raniganj, W. W. Hunter had mentioned in *A Statistical Account of Bengal,* published in 1877 that it was a small municipal town as described by Haldane. The population during Hunter's report, had deteriorated by one, i.e , 1,498. He had also mentioned about a Primary school which was attended by 50 boys and its teacher used to receive a stipend of Rs. 5 only a month from Government, besides local fees.

In the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea,* 1911, by L. S. S. O'Malley, it is mentioned as follows:—

"A village in the Araria subdivision, 16 miles due west of Basantpur and 30 miles north-west of Purnea. It contains a police *thana* and was formerly a municipal union under Act XX of 1856."

It appears from O'Malley's accounts that the municipality had already disappeared long before the publication of the last *District Gazetteer of Purnea* in 1911.

The District Census Handbook of Purnea, 1951, mentions that the *thana* number of this village is 78 and it has a police-station of the same name. There is one Lower Primary school and the total area of this village is 1,985 acres. There are 210 number of houses and the total population is 1,053, i.e., 530 males and 523 females. The number of literate persons is 91 males and 4 females only. Mostly people of this village are engaged in cultivation.

There is a good deal of diminution in the population with regard to the accounts of Mr. Haldane and Mr. Hunter. What is the real cause of this deterioration is not known.

Two blocks are functioning in this village—one is known as Raniganj East Development Block which is functioning since December, 1954 and the other is Raniganj West Development Block which is functioning since October, 1960. Raniganj falls

within the Raniganj West Development Block. The Raniganj West Block will soon shift to Bhargama village, a few miles west of Raniganj. This block is also known as Bhargama C. D. Block.

Ranipatra.—A village 5 miles south of Purnea town. It is an old village with a railway station. Purnea-Katihar Road passes through this village.

According to the *District Census Handbook of Purnea*, 1951, this place is mentioned as Raipur Ranipatra with a total population of 323 persons, i.e., 168 males and 155 females. Its *thana* number is 68 and the police-station is at Purnea. Its total area is 503 acres with 77 houses. There is one Government Basic school and a sub-post office.

A *Sarvodaya Ashram* is functioning here since 1952. This institution has different branches:—

Bihar Khadi Gramodyog Vidyalaya (*Khadi*).—Fifty students (40 males and 10 females) are admitted in this *vidyalaya*. It has got a course of eighteen months. They receive training in spinning, weaving, oil crushing, soap making, repair of the implements, etc.

During training period they receive a stipend of Rs 45 per month. Hostel facilities are provided.

After finishing their training they are employed in the different branches of Khadi Bhandar located in the district, or are employed elsewhere.

Gram Swarajya Vidyalaya.—This *Vidyalaya* has been established for the purpose of teaching Harijan and Adibasi students from Class VIII to X. There is one more hostel which has been constructed with the grant sanctioned by Welfare Department.

There is accommodation for 28 students in which 14 are Adibasis and 14 Harijans. During training period these students receive a stipend of Rs. 25 only, per month. They receive training in both aspects of subject—Theoretical and Practical

In theory papers they are given the general education and in practical, tailoring, printing and dyeing, leather work, weaving, etc., are taught.

Mahila Shikshan Vidyalaya—Trains ladies up to VIIth Class. It has a condensed course of two years.

Balika Chhattravas.—This hostel provides accommodation to 24 female trainees.

Bal-Bari.—This institution provides to the children from 3 to 6 years and when they reach their 6 years of age they are sent to the *Gram Swarajya Vidyalaya*. There is one boarding house for children which provides accommodation for 25 students. Students from outside of this *Ashram* are also admitted to this institution.

There is one *Shishu Varga* also where infant children from 6 months to 3 years are kept. There is a big library with about 5,000 books. Several other periodicals, dailies and magazines are provided by this library.

There is one instructors' lodge providing accommodation for 10 male workers. There is another lodge which have seven seats for ladies.

There are 10 blocks of houses known as family quarters. There is one mess which provides meal to 300 persons per day

There is a big cowshed which is known as Krishi Gopalan Vibhag where cattle are kept.

There is one *Khadi Gramodyog Kendra Bhandar* which supplies *khadi*, thread, cotton, *Sarvodaya* literature, etc., to the different branches of *Khadi Gramodyog Bhandar* located in Purnea district.

There is one dyeing and printing department which dyes and prints Khadi cloth

Purnea Zila Bhoodan Yajna Office is located here. It maintains the records of the land given in gift and also land distributed to landless cultivators.

There is one *Prakritik Chikitsa Kendra* with 10 beds. This institution is for curing ailments by naturopathy.

Ranipatra *Ashram* with all its branches has been doing very useful work in spreading Gandhiji's ideas and trains up workers to take up village work.

Sarsi.—Sarsi is an old village in P.-S. Dhamdaha in Sadar subdivision. It is at a distance of 18 miles to the north-west of Purnea connected by rail and 17 miles by road. The railway

station has the same name but it is within a separate *mouza* known as Majhua Prem Raj. Majhua Prem Raj is in Banmankhi P.-S. The total area of this village is 2,800.32 acres.

About fifty years back the main Kosi river was flowing very close to this village but now it has shifted to the borders of Darbhanga and Saharsa districts. Now there is a small river known as Livari which is about 6 miles in length and half furlong in breadth. During summer season it becomes dry and contains water only in deeper portions. It is only during rainy season that it is overflooded but the flood water does not enter into this village as this village is on a high level. Even when the river Kosi was flowing close to this village, flood waters of the devastating river never entered into it.

The total population, according to the census of 1951, was 1,595, i.e., 861 males and 734 females but the figure of population shows an increase in 1961 census. It records 2,000 persons, i.e., 1,060 males and 940 females.

This was a rural village but since five years the drift towards town is increasing. The villagers have become cinema and circus-minded. They can even sell the bulk of crop for a picture or a circus show.

This village is divided into several *tolas*, i.e., Sarsi Gote *tola*, Banawat *tola*, Brahman *tola*, Musaharia *tola*, etc. The whole village consists of 22 number of castes and 227 number of houses.

There is one temple of God Shiva. There is one *Idgah* for Muslims also.

There is a ruined *kothi* of an indigo planter. Sarsi *Kothi* was a famous indigo centre under the Europeans. Raja P. C. Lal had purchased it and has converted into a farm centre. There are one Co-operative Society and one branch Post and Telegraph Office.

There is a rice and flour mill at Majhua Prem Raj which is close to village Sarsi. It has affected the hand-pounded rice of Sarsi.

There is a regulated market at Majhua Prem Raj. There is one *hat* which is organised on every Monday and Thursday. There are two more *hats* at a distance of one mile from here known as Harbanga *hat* and Parasmani *hat*. Harbanga *hat* is organised on every Friday and Sunday. There are two Government Fair Price Shops—one at Majhua Prem Raj and the other at village Sarsi.

Communication is quite satisfactory. Besides, the railway trains five to six up and down buses run daily. Four numbers of up and down passenger trains run.

There is a *Gram Panchayat*. There are one adult literacy centre, one L. P. and two U. P. schools attached to each other and one High school. There are two libraries.

Surjyapur Pargana—The last *District Gazetteer of Purnea*, 1911, by O'Malley, mentions as follows:—

"A *pargana* in the north-east of the district, extending over 729 square miles. This *pargana* was held by Saiyed Fakhrud-din Husain at the time of the Permanent Settlement, when it was assessed to a revenue of Rs. 2,46,226. On his death, it was divided between Didar Husain and Akbar Husain, the former making his headquarters at Kishanganj, while his brother remained at Khagra. Their descendants are known as the Kishanganj and Khagra branches respectively. A sketch of the history of the latter has been given in the article on the Khagra Estate, and it will be necessary therefore to deal only with the Kishanganj branch. Akbar Husain having died childless, his widow Bibi Zahurunnissa succeeded to the property, which she left to her brother Husain Raza, a petty *milikdar* of Aliganj in this district. His grandsons were Saiyed Asghar Raza Khan Bahadur and Saiyed Dilawar Raza, during whose minority the estate was managed by the Court of Wards from 1874 to 1883. It was then released with a rent-roll of over two lakhs, but the heirs subsequently lost most of their property. In 1883, the heirs of Nawab Saiyed Lutf Ali Khan acquired for Rs. 8,96,000 a share of two annas 6 *gandas* odd in the property; the rent-roll of this share is now about 2¼ lakhs. In 1897 Babu Dharam Chand Lal, father of Babu Prithi Chand Lal, bought by private treaty Saiyed Dilawar Raza's entire interest of 2 annas 16 *gandas* for Rs. 5,12,000 and a perpetual annuity of Rs. 2,000 per month. Saiyed Asghar Raza had an equal share, of which a portion representing 2 annas 11 *gandas* was bought at an auction sale in 1900 for Babu Prithi Chand Lal, then a minor, for Rs. 6,50,000. The remaining

share of 4 *gandas* odd was also sold by auction, and the purchaser sold it to Babu Prithi Chand Lal in 1907 for Rs. 30,000.

"The *pargana* is now divided as follows. The representatives of the Khagra estate are now proprietors of a separate account of a little over 8 annas of the estate. Babu Prithi Chand Lal is the proprietor of 5¾ annas; and the heirs of Nawab Saiyed Lutf Ali Khan of Patna have a separate account of 2¼ annas."

After the passing of the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950, this *pargana* has now vested in the State.

Thakurganj.—A village in the Kishanganj subdivision, situated 32 miles east and north of Kishanganj on the bank of the river Burhidhanri. It has a police-station, post and telegraph office, railway station (N. F. R.), sub-registry office, a dispensary, an Inspection Bungalow, a High school, a Middle school and a girls' Upper Primary school. It is now the headquarters of the circle of the same name constituted in 1956.

In the list of revenue villages its name is Kanakpur (*thana* no. 409), the area of which was 3,055 acres in 1951. The number of occupied houses was 1,173 with a population of 4,680. The village is situated in the extreme interior of the Kishanganj subdivision where strictly speaking no road system exists. It is connected by Purnea and Kishanganj by the North East Frontier Railway. Except rail there is no other communication. A *hat* is held on Mondays and Fridays. The inhabitants of the village are mostly agriculturists. There are a few Marwaris whose main business is money-lending. They have big palatial buildings which have remarkable contrast with the hutments of the inhabitants. They thrive on the misery of the people of the locality. The maxim 'once in debt will always be in debt' is totally applicable here. The money-lenders usually take interest two annas per mensem. They also advance money on the standing crops such as on *patua* and paddy, which is locally called *fatka*. Here there is no place to describe in detail multiplicable rate of interest of the Marwaris. The rate of interest of the native merchants mentioned 150 years ago by Francis Buchanan is still prevalent in this locality of Thakurganj.

Thakurganj though a small village market is a good centre for jute trade. Jute is grown widely in the locality of Thakurganj. Petty dealers and agents of the wholesale dealers go about from homestead to homestead making purchases of the fibre. A good quality of jute is purchased on the *hatia* days. There are

four *golas* of the Marwaris where jute is stored and then sent to different places through the purchasing agents. Besides jute the next important crop of the locality is paddy. There are four rice mills at Thakurganj.

In the history of Thakurganj, the names of its two pioneers, Shri K. C. Lahiri and his uncle Bireshwar Lahiri are worth mention.* It were they who started in 1926 a small rice mill at Thakurganj. By 1927 there was an expansion of this small concern and the establishment of a steam engine and boiler marked an improvement. The concern was converted into a private limited company under the name of Thakurganj Mills, Ltd., which was incorporated in 1928. The concern still continues and is an important industrial establishment in Kishanganj subdivision. In 1929, Thakurganj Ltd. opened a small sugar mill and oil mill at Islampur. Islampur is now in West Bengal. The mill was not working successfully and so it was closed after two years. In 1929 they also started a bank registered under the Indian Companies Act, 1913 at Thakurganj. The establishment of the bank shows that they visualized the necessity of banking facilities for the economic prosperity of the inhabitants. The said bank ran into voluntary liquidation in 1955. At present the sub-registry office is located in the building of the said bank.

Thakurganj was constituted a separate circle in 1956 as the Islampur circle to which Thakurganj police-station formed a part was transferred to West Bengal in view of the recommendation of the State Reorganisation Commission. From Thakurganj police-station also an area of 37,352 acres with a population of 14,357 was transferred to West Bengal. So the present area of the Thakurganj police-station is 157 square miles with a population of 58,522 persons according to 1951 census. The Revenue jurisdiction of the Thakurganj circle covers the entire areas of the Thakurganj police-station. The rent demand of the circle is Rs. 2,71,104, cess Rs. 17,130 and miscellaneous Rs. 23,000.

Thakurganj is said to be named after Bhim, the great hero of the *Mahabharata,* who served as a *thakur* (cook) in the house of Raja Virat. It is mentioned in the *Mahabharata* that Raja Virat gave shelter to five Pandava brothers during their one year incognito exile (*Ajnyat vasa*). There are two tanks "Bhatdhala" and "Sagdhala" to which the local people said were utilised by Bhim for receptacle of *bhat* and *sag* after cooking. Viratnagar of the *Mahabharata* is said to be located here and not in Nepal. Some stones with inscriptions were dug up by the Great Trigonometrical Surveyors, when the triangulation of the district was

*The later had a large orchard with rare plants.

being effected at Thakurganj. They were said to mark the site of the chief residence of Raja Virat, whose territory lay along the east of the Kusi, and included the country round about as far as Rangpur and Dinajpur.* It may be mentioned that almost up to the first quarter of 20th century there was hardly any effort on the part of the people of Purnea regarding their economic or material improvement on lines other than agricultural.

In spite of Purnea growing a large quantity of rice and other grains, jute, the golden fibre there was hardly any rice mill or jute mill.

The first rice mill in Kishanganj subdivision was started near about 1924. This was a joint venture of late Shri Surendra Nath Sarkar and Shri Satya Prasanna Bose who established at Galgalia near the railway station of the same name, a rice and oil mill. In 1926 a small rice mill driven by oil engine was started by Dr. K. C. Lahiri and his uncle Shri Bireshwar Lahiri By 1927 there was an expansion of this small concern and the establishment of a steam engine and boiler marked an improvement. The concern was converted into a private limited company under the name of Thakurganj mills, Limited, which was incorporated in 1928. The concern still continues and is an important industrial establishment in Kishanganj subdivision now, nay in the district of Purnea.

In 1929, Thakurganj Mill, Ltd., opened a small sugar mill and oil mill at Islampur together with milling of paddy and grinding of wheat. Islampur is now in West Bengal. The sugar mill at Islampur continued for over two years. As the mill was not financially successful, it had to be closed and late K. C. Lahiri got the mill from other shareholders by paying the shares of price of the mill to other co-sharers. The mill is still in possession of the purchasers but lying idle. Some of the machineries and iron pans, etc., had been sold by the purchaser at scrap value. But chemical analysis of the local sugarcanes had shown that they were quite sufficient for running a mill. The small plant that was set up, however, could not compete with the larger sugar mills in other parts of Bihar. Nevertheless, it continued for some years (about three years) and remained the only sugar mill of the district for many years. The quality of the sugar produced was quite good but owing to the large overhead cost and the outturn capacity being poor the price of the sugar was higher than the ruling price of sugar produced from elsewhere.

*Statistical Account of Purniah, p. 209.

The same group of pioneers, Shri Bireshwar Lahiri and Dr. K. C. Lahiri had also made an experiment of an agricultural farm of improved standard with pisciculture and poultry. They took settlement of agricultural lands from the late Maharaja Prodyot Coomar Tagore of Calcutta and started agriculture, horticulture and fish culture. The agricultural farm at Thakurganj commenced from the western limit of the railway land just west of Thakurganj railway station and stretched westwards covering an almost compact area of 210/ acres, including the Pauranic tank of "Bhatdhala" and "Sagdhala". [The story prevalent in the locality is that during the period of exile incognito (*ajnyat vasa*) of the Pandavas, Bhim utilised these two tanks for receptacle of *bhat* and *sag* after cooking.] The agricultural operations in this farm are still continuing, although some portion of it had been acquired by the Bihar Government for Government purposes, some portion gilted to the local High school and some portion for holding Thakurganj *mela*. The cultivation of the farm is conducted under the supervision of the Agricultural Department and scientific manures are used Experimental crops are also grown for propagation in the neighbourhood. Active interest was taken to experiment with improved seeds, and better manures. Owing to the epidemic of Ranikhet the poultry farm had to be closed down after some time.

They also started a bank registered under the Indian Companies Act, 1913 at Thakurganj in 1929. The establishment of the bank shows that they visualised the necessity of banking facilities for the economic development of the people. The said bank ran into voluntary liquidation a few years ago to avoid competition with the co-operative movement.

A tile manufacturing concern was also started by them and tiles of the type of Raniganj tiles were prepared for about three years. When the price of C. I. sheets for roofing soared very high, tiles after the model of Raniganj tiles were manufactured by the said Lahiris and they had ready market.

The Lahiris also started a weaving factory "Bharti Weaving Factory", manufactured *dhoties, saris,* towels, bed sheets, napkin, etc., which were readily appreciated in the market.

Amdabad Block.—The area of this block is 60 sq. miles with 53 villages. The demand of revenue in 1959-60 was Rs. 1,50,988 and the collection was 63 per cent. The block was set up on 2nd October, 1957.

The block has taken up the construction of tube-wells, surface wells, and irrigation *bandhs.*

There are 11 scheduled *Gram Panchayats*. The percentage of the scheduled castes is 1½ per cent.

There are many small temples and mosques in this area. It has got various cottage industries like the making of bamboo baskets, mats and iron implements.

There are five *hats* namely, Gopalpur, Amdabad, Vardiyara Chakiya, Paharpur and Kishanpur, and there are three *melas*, namely Chain Paharpur, Kartik Purnima Manihari *ghat* and Chair Barini Manihari *ghat* and a *bazar*, viz., Roshna *bazar*.

All roads of this block are unmetalled which are unsuitable for heavy traffic during rainy season.

There are four villages, namely, Amdabad, Baniya, Vardiyara and Karimullapur each having a population of one thousand.

There is one dispensary at 'Dilli Diwan Ganj' and a malaria centre hospital at Amdabad.

Amour Development Block.—This block consists of two parts (*i*) Amour North and (*ii*) Amour South The area of Amour North is 50,820.71 acres and of Amour South is 60,858 56 acres consisting of 132 and 162 villages respectively.

The revenue demands are Rs. 86,285 04 and Rs. 82,712 78 and the percentage of collection during 1959-60 was 44 per cent each.

There is only one District Board road from Baisee to Bahadurganj. The area is flood affected.

In Amour North there is one veterinary dispensary at Baisee and one District Board hospital at Machhatta and Hafânia and one veterinary dispensary and one Dak Bungalow at Amour in Amour South.

In Amour North two *hats* one at village Routa and the other at Angash are held and one at Bohra in Amour South.

The area is very backward and needs more communication to improve the internal economy.

Azamnagar Development Block.—The area of the block is 111 square miles and covers 234 villages. total revenue is Rs. 4,62,439 and the percentage of collection during 1959-60 was 42 per cent.

The block was started on 1st October, 1956. The block's office building has been constructed at the village Azamnagar itself. *Gram Panchayats* are getting conscious of their obligations.

The tribal population is about 3 per cent. A L. P. aboriginal school has been established in village Sirikol by the Education Department which is located in the tribal area.

A grain *gola* has been established at Azamnagar which loans out paddy among harijans and aboriginals. Due to the high jute production, the block is economically better.

The block has a handful of agriculturists and the majority of them are agricultural labourers.

There is a very old *Shiva mandir* at village Gorakhpur where Hindus assemble and offer *pujas* and sacred water on the Shivaling on the eve of Shivaratri festival. There are ruins of ancient monument lying in this forested region at village Garh Sitalpur.

Baskets and mat-covers, for covering the bullock-cart known as *tappars* are the two small industries.

Melas are held at Salmari, Mukania and Azamnagar during Dasahara and at village Damaipur in January on "Tilasankranti".

Hats are held at different intervals within a week at various places, i.e., Azamnagar, Alampur, Salmari, Mukania, Gaighatta, Sitapur, Nimol, Chophar, Ghordah, *Hat* Baroi, Santola, Dhena, Bagchatta and Porla.

The condition of roads is very poor and the people move on foot or by carts drawn by buffaloes. This block is essentially a jute producing area but due to bad communication quick transport to Salmari and Azamnagar railway stations is hindered.

Siktia, Khunial, Azamnagar and Jalki are the important villages with more than 2,000 population.

There is only one State dispensary of District Board located at Azamnagar.

Names of *hats*.	Occasion.	Remarks.
1. Basamatia	Wednesday and Saturday. ...	Twice in a week.
2. Ghurna	Monday and Thursday	Ditto.
3. Ghurna (Gudari)	Monday and Thursday	Daily.
4. Fulkaha Sukar	Friday ...	Once in a week.
5. Fulkaha Manghat	Tuesday ...	Ditto.
6. Fulkaha Gudari	Tuesday ...	Daily.

Names of *hats*.	Occasion.	Remarks.
7. Sonapur ..	Tuesday and Friday	Twice in a week.
8. Bhorhar ..	Tuesday and Saturday.	Ditto.
9. Deviganj ..	Wednesday and Friday.	Ditto.
10. Dumaria ..	Sunday and Wednesday.	Ditto.
11. Khabdah ..	Monday and Thursday.	Ditto.
12. Narpatganj ..	Wednesday and Saturday.	Ditto.
13. Gokhalapur ..	Tuesday and Friday	Ditto.

Names of markets.	Remarks.
1. Basamatia ..	It is connected with Nepal as it is situated on the border of Nepal. It is a business centre specially for jute and paddy.
2. Fulkaha (Nawabganj).	It is connected with Nepal as it is situated on the border of Nepal.
3. Sonapur ..	It is connected with Nepal as it is on the border of Nepal.
4. Ghurna ..	It is connected with Nepal as it is on the border of Nepal.

Names of *melas*.	Occasion.	Remarks.
1. Basamatia ..	Dasahara festival ...	It starts on Astami and continues for eight days.
2. Fulkaha ..	Ditto ..	It starts on Astami and continues for fifteen days.
3. Fatehpur cattle *mela*.	Pus Purnima festival.	It starts on fifteenth Pus and continues for twenty-five days.
4. Narpatganj ..	Dasahara festival ..	It starts on Astami and continues for twenty days.

Bahadurganj Block.—Bahadurganj is still at *Anchal's* stage and is expected to be converted into a block soon. The area is 100 square miles covering 121 villages. The revenue demand is Rs. 1,50,000.

No important projects have been taken up for rural electrification, water-supply, irrigation and construction of *pucca* roads. The only road worth mentioning is the road running from Bahadurganj to Kishanganj which has been laid with brick. It has been reported that there are no interesting features of the block or the working of the *Gram Panchayats* or the contribution of the *Mukhiyas* and their reaction on the villages and particularly on tribals. There is no industrialisation round the *Anchal*. Some weaving of cloth is carried out in widely dispersed area. There is no concentration in any particular area.

There are three important *hats* at Ganji, Bahadurganj and Lohagara. No *melas* are held in the *Anchal*

There are a Dak Bungalow and dispensary at Bahadurganj. The communication is extremely bad. Roads are mostly *katcha*. During rains the roads become impassable. The villages having more than 2,000 population are Gangi, Altabari, Bangama, Bhoradah, Bauria, Dohar, Palasmane and Bhatabari.

Barari Block.—This block is in Katihar subdivision and has an area of 163 square miles and includes 123 villages. The total revenue is Rs. 2,03,000 and the percentage of collection is 43.5.

This is a pre-extension block since 2nd of October, 1959. It has six railway stations, namely, Sukhasan, Semapur, Karhagola Road, Bakhari, Kursela and Katareah. Some canals are under excavation by the Kosi Project for irrigation purpose. No important development projects have been taken up by the block so far.

Twenty-six official and one non-official *Gram Panchayats* are functioning here. This is a backward area but people are becoming conscious due to *Panchayats* and their co-operation in public utility work. There is a small percentage of tribals who have been given special educational and medical facilities.

There are two well-known temples, one *Kali Mandir* at Laxmipur and the other *Durga Mandir* at Barari. There is only one mosque at Marghia. Regarding Chhaurabir *Sthan* which is largely visited at Nenua, it is said that one child devotee was sacrificed by another child devotee. Karhagola *Ghat* is at the confluence of the rivers Ganga and Kosi. A large number of people take their bath there especially during Kartik and *Maghi Purnamasi*.

Kursela and Dumaria are the centres of cottage industries where *khadi* and handloom cloths are prepared and sold at *Sarvodaya Ashram*, Kursela and also in the weavers' village.

Karhagola *Ghat* is important for inter-state trade from where commodities of several crores are transported within a year.

The condition of communication is acute for want of road links. There is one Ganga-Darjeeling Road which has no link with other places of this district. During jute season traffic is particularly heavy on this road. This area has several resources for prosperity and it can prosper only when there are a road from Barari to Dumar via Laxmipur and another from Barari to Katihar. A road-*cum*-rail bridge at Kursela will connect Patna and Purnea by road now There is a road-*cum*-rail bridge at Barauni. Purnea is well connected by road with Kursela and Katihar and daily buses ply. There is a small aerodrome at Kursela. The ex-*zamindar* has his own private planes which land there.

The villages Barari, Dumar and Laxmipur have a population of more than 2,000 each.

There are three dispensaries within this *Anchal*—one at Barari, another at Bhawanipur and the third at Jagdishpur.

There are one Dak Bungalow at Barari and three high schools—one at Barari, another at Kursela and the third at Jotramrai-Bhawanipur.

For decades past there used to be a regular steamer service of Indian General Steam Navigation concerned with a halt at Karhagola *Ghat*. This was a long distance steamer service from Buxar to Calcutta by the Ganga and Bhagirathi rivers. After embargoes were imposed on the creation of East Pakistan and owing to other problems this steamer service has closed down which has caused a considerable amount of difficulty for passengers and goods transport.

There was a sugar mill of Raj Darbhanga in this area which has closed down decades back. The presence of a large Sikh colony at Bhawanipur near Karhagola railway station and a heavy bus traffic from Karhagola to Purnea and *vice versa* cutting down a railway journey to Purnea via Katihar are some other important features.

Barhara Development Block.—The area of the block is 93 square miles and covers 63 villages. The total revenue of the block is one lac and twenty thousands and the percentage of collection ranges from 37 to 55.

The block was started in 1956. It is situated in the interior of the district and is connected by railways. This *Anchal* was in Kosi bed some 200 years back, but Kosi has receded and it has become culturable. The lands of this area are sandy.

There are 11 statutory *Gram Panchayats* in this block. It is gathered that tribal people of this area do not attach any importance to the *Gram Panchayats*. There are 46 Co-operative Societies.

Communications are bad. Only a road from Dhamdaha to Barhara has been taken up, besides the construction of 40 culverts in different village roads of the *Anchal*.

For the purpose of irrigation 16 tube-wells have been sunk. The construction of three canals in the Kosi Project Administration and Minor Irrigation Scheme of tanks and wells have also been taken up.

The percentage of tribal people in this Anchal is 6. They are provided with some special facilities such as wells for drinking water, poultry, improved agricultural seeds and implements.

There is one temple of Barneshwar Mahadeva said to be of antiquity. When a tank was being dug during 1958-59 a marble statue of a Goddess came out, which is being preserved in the information centre of the block.

There are no cottage industries. Recently *charkhas* (spinning wheels) have been introduced.

There is only one *mela* named Barneshwar *Mela*. Barhara village is on rail route and it is a key centre for transaction of jute and tobacco.

There are one State dispensary at Barhara and three sub-centres at Deori, Mauzanpath and Aurahi.

The villages which have a population of 2,000 and above are Barhara, Sukhsena, Dibra, Aurlaha and Deori.

Barsoi Circle.—Barsoi Circle is consisting of two *Anchals*, Barsoi and Balrampur. It has not yet been converted into a block.

The total area of Barsoi *Anchal* is 65,000 acres with 232 villages. The total demand of revenue is Rs. 2,23,000 and the percentage of collection is 90 whereas the total area of Balrampur *Anchal* is 42,601 acres with 156 villages and the total demand of revenue is Rs. 82,000. The percentage of collection is 85.

No important projects such as rural elctrification, rural water-supply, irrigation or construction of *pucca* roads were taken up in any of the *Anchals*.

There are 12 statutory *Panchayats*, out of 20 in Barsoi *Anchal* and 7 out of 12 in Balrampur *Anchal*.

There are no tribals in Barsoi *Anchal* but Balrampur *Anchal* is populated by 10 per cent of tribals They are being helped by State through settlement of cultivable lands, industrial loans and subsidies. Arrangements for drinking water wells and irrigation wells have been made.

The cottage industries are in primitive stage in both the *Anchals*.

There are three important *hats* in Barsoi *Anchal*, namely, Abadpur, Bighore and Chandpara. Bighore *hat* and *mela* are held on the border of Bengal and Bihar. No inter-state trade is carried on.

There are two prominent *hats* in Balrampur *Anchal*.

The road communications of both the *Anchals* are primitive There is great necessity of one *pucca* road from Barsoi connecting National Highway road, Tunnidighi and Barsoi stations to Abadpur.

Similarly a road running from Purnea to Balrampur via Telta is essential as Telta has been selected for headquarters block.

Bhargama Development Block.—The area of this block is 92.14 square miles with 67 villages within its jurisdiction. The annual demand of revenue was Rs. 96,546.82 in 1959-60 and the collection was 48 per cent.

The block was set up on the 14th October, 1955 and is continuing up-till now as Community Development Stage I. It is not electrified. There are 17 *pucca* wells, 146 C. C. wells, 121 *bundhs* and tanks and 104 tube-wells have been constructed. 150 pumping sets have been distributed among the cultivators.

There are 15 notified and 1 non-notified *Gram Panchayats* under this block.

Cottage Industry.—Poultry, carpentry, *telghani* and manufacture of blankets are the main cottage industries of this block.

There are seven *hats*, namely, Mahathwa, Bhargama, Khajuria, Charaiya, Birnagar, Hmujwa and Bhatgama and there are three *melas*, namely, Shankarpur, Khajuria and Bhargama and there is one Mahathwa market.

All roads of this block have been damaged by Kosi river. There are two unmetalled District Board roads, namely, Raniganj to Khajuria and Raniganj to Mahathwa but both are disconnected by the rivers Lachcha and Dhariam. Both are unsuitable for export and import during rainy season.

The villages, namely, Bhargama, Paikpur, Manullahpatti, Raghunathpur, Sirsia, Hanuman Nagar, Jain Nagar, Kusmaul, Simarhani, Shekhpura, Sirsiakalan, Khajuria, Khuthha Baijnathpur and Birnagar have a population of more than two thousands.

There are three health sub-centres at Paikpur, Mahathwa and Brahnotra.

Bhawanipur Development Block.—The total area of the block is 39,688 acres comprising of 88 villages. The total revenue is Rs. 2,09,393 excepting Sairat. The percentage of collection during 1959-60 was 61.

The block was converted into C. D. Stage I from pre-extension stage from 1st April, 1960.

The percentage of tribals is reported to be 15 of the population and the tribals have also got places as members of the *Panch*.

There are one *Ghani* Industrial Co-operative Society at Teleyari and another at *Khadi Gramodyog*, Bhawanipur. There are three market places at Bhawanipur, Akbarpur and Raipur ghat. Bhawanipur is a big centre of jute.

Falka Development Block.—The area of this block is 110 sq. miles comprising of 102 villages. The total revenue demand is Rs. 1,03,822 and the percentage of collection during 1959-60 was 57.

There are 17 *Gram Panchayats*. The percentage of tribal population is negligible. Tribal welfare schemes in form of starting High schools, providing water-supply and subsidiary grants, three blocks of residential building at Dumar and Barelta have been implemented.

There is an old tank at Permokam.

In spite of there being one *Khadi Bhandar* at Malhorea the area is very poor from cottage industrial point of view.

There are four *hats*, namely, Chaudpur, Samela, Pothia and Falka and one *mela* called Gaddighat *mela* is held on the occasion of Paus Purnima.

There is a good road running from Purnea to Kursela that has solved much of the problem of communication.

There are one Government dispensary at Pothia and a Dak Bungalow.

Forbesganj (West) Development Block.—This block (Forbesganj West) was started on 26th May 1957 and is in Araria subdivision of Purnea district. It has an area of 76,825 acres and covers 113 revenue villages. The total revenue demand and cess in the year 1959-60 was Rs. 1,34,138 and the annual collection was 46 per cent. There are 20 *Gram Panchayats.*

This block has taken up the rural water-supply problem both for drinking and irrigational purposes. A large number of wells and other irrigation schemes have been implemented.

Recently arrangements for hand-pounded rice and one metal industry have been made. Proposals have been made to start one *khadi*, one soap and one perfumery as small-scale industries during the Second Five-Year Plan. There are potentialities for starting carpentry, poultry and cottage industries.

The following *hats* take place in this block—Jogbani, Bathnaha, Phulberia station, Kothi, Gorhiyare, Kusmaha, Amhara, Pothia, Simraha, Parwaha and Khawaspur There are two big markets, viz., Forbesganj and Jogbani. Jogbani is the inter-state trade and commerce centre between India and Nepal. The commodities for inter-state trade are timber, *ganja* and liquor. Two big *melas*, i.e., Kalipuja *mela*, Forbesganj and Khawaspur *mela* are organised every year.

There are three metalled roads, viz., Forbesganj to Araria, Forbesganj to Jogbani and Forbesganj to Raniganj. The villages are generally connected with the P. W. D. road except, the villages on the eastern side which are inaccessible during rainy season. There have been proposals to construct roads from Forbesganj to Khawaspur, Gurme and from Forbesganj to Kusmaha. The construction of these two roads will be able to ease the communication to inaccessible places throughout the year.

There are 52 L. P. and U. P. schools, one Degree college, two Higher Secondary schools, one girls' H. E. school and nineteen libraries.

There are two Dak Bungalows, one at Forbesganj and the other at Bathnaha.

There are two hospitals, one at Forbesganj and the other at Jogbani and one District Board veterinary hospital at Forbesganj.

Kadwa Development Block.—There are 264 villages in the block with an area of 134 sq. miles. The total revenue of this block is Rs. 1,41,341 and the annual collection is about 62 per cent.

This block is functioning since October, 1956. This block consists of 10 *Halkas* and 20 *Gram Panchayats.*

For irrigation purposes two wells, one M. I. *bundh*, one pipe of 4" and one boring have been constructed.

There are four *Panchayats*, namely, Balia Belon, Kurum, Mohammadpur and Kumhri which have been entrusted with the collection and the work of all *Panchayats* is satisfactory

There are some tribals for whom drinking water facilities are being provided.

This block is famous for jute and paddy cultivation. Cultivators are now using chemical fertilisers and improved implements of agriculture.

There are two important temples of Lord Shiva, one at Mauza Chandpur and the other at Pelagarh and one mosque at Mauza Perveli with the jurisdiction of Kadwa *thana*.

The villages Gethora, *thana* no. 249, Kumhri, *thana* no. 269, Mohammadpur, *thana* no. 265, Pelagarh, *thana* no. 495 and Taibpur, *thana* no. 174, have a population of 2,000 persons and above.

The communication is unsatisfactory and the entire area is affected by flood during rainy season

The block has two dispensaries running at Sonaili and Durgaganj, three health sub-centres running at Bharri, Kursail and Raiwanpur and one Dak Bungalow near Kadwa. Here two fully and two partially recognised High schools are present.

Kasba Development Block—The block (Kasba) lies in the Sadar subdivision and has an area of 144 square miles and includes 113 villages. The total revenue during 1959-60 was Rs. 2,85,000 and the percentage of collection during 1959-60 was 76.

This block is functioning since 2nd October, 1957. The office building is very near to the Kasba railway station

This block is electrified. For irrigation purposes 12 borings, 14 irrigational wells, 28 *pucca* wells and 122 tube-wells have been constructed and 18 wells repaired. Several other buildings for health sub-centres, veterinary dispensaries, etc., are under construction. Two school buildings have already been constructed and other thirteen are under construction.

There are ten *Gram Panchayats*. Forty-five Co-operative Societies are functioning in this area.

There is a tribal population of about 2,500 only and they are being provided with the facilities for wells and tube-wells.

The techniques like the use of fertilisers, implements, waste land reclamation and Japanese method of cultivation, have improved the agricultural economy of this area. This block is primarily a jute-growing area. The scheme for the improvement of Jute-retting tank has helped in having a good quality jute fibre. A Bamboo and Cane Co-operative Society has been established for the development of the bamboo and cane industries.

Three *melas* are held in this area out of which a big *mela* is organised at Garhbanaili and the other two at Khata Ghat and Kasba.

The main markets of this block are at Kasba, Garhbanaili and Jalalgarh.

The highway from Purnea to Jalalgarh runs for about 12 miles through this block. A State dispensary is situated at Kasba

The villages Enamli, Sanhua, Jalwaria, Kasba and Jalalgarh have a population of more than 2,000 persons each.

Aghani paddy and jute are the main crops. Jute is a cash crop giving both employment and money to the labourers and other persons.

In this block there is an old fort which is situated in the village Jalalgarh. Perhaps the name of the village is called after this fort. The fort is situated at a distance of one mile south-east from the Purnea-Araria Road. The history of the fort is shrouded in uncertainty but from the sight of this ruined fort it appears that it was built for the purpose of military garrison against the inroads of the Gurkhas.

Kasba was a few years back an important trade centre of Purnea. It is reported that the commercial importance of Kasba received a great set-back since the establishment of the Gulabbagh *mandi*. The hand-pounded rice of Kasba was very popular and used to be sent out. But due to establishment of a large number of rice mills in Purnea district, the hand-pounded rice of Kasba has practically lost its importance. Though Kasba has lost much of its past commercial importance still it is an important trade centre of Purnea. The chief commercial commodities of the place are jute and grains. There are several rice mills in this block. The traders of Kasba are quite rich.

It appears that the people of this block are much *mela*-minded. They spend most of their hard-earned money from jute cultivation in these *melas*.

Katihar North Development Block.—This block (Katihar North) lies in Katihar subdivision. It has an area of 103 square miles and covers 126 villages. The total revenue demand in the year 1959-60 was Rs. 2,73,104 and the percentage of annual collection in 1959-60 was 41.

This block was started in October, 1954. It consists of 12 *Halkas* with a population of 68,284 as per census figure of 1961. There are 19 *Gram Panchayats* but their contribution so far is reported to be rather inadequate.

The block has been able to construct a number of drinking water wells, tube-wells and irrigational wells. There are three health sub-centres.

There is a heavy concentration of the tribals in this area forming about 43 per cent of the population. They are being provided with medical and educational facilities. People here seem to be home sick and as such incidence of emigration is very rare

There are two very old temples—one at Bharidih and the other at Souria. The Bharidih temple was constructed probably in the 17th century or so. There is also one Christian Mission situated just by the side of the Dandkhora railway station.

The cottage industries of cane, bamboo and jute-rope are very popular in this locality.

Two big *hats* are held in a week in the villages Hassanganj and Dandkhora. Two big *melas* are organised every year, one at Sapni and the other at Bharidih. Besides, tribal *melas* are also held in different parts of the *Anchal*.

Katihar town also falls within this *Anchal* which is a very big trade centre for jute and wheat products. There are two weekly *hats* in the town.

The communication is bad as there is no *pucca* road. The construction of a *pucca* road from Dalan station to Sonaili via Kodepura, and Borni, etc., will connect a big inaccessible area having a population of more than 2,000 in each village.

Bamboo potentiality is very high in this area and hence such cottage industries may develop, if suitable aid is provided.

Kishanganj Development Block.—The area of the block is 70 square miles and covers 87 villages. The total revenue demand is Rs. 3,78,273 and the percentage of annual collection during 1959-60 was 46.

The block was started on the 1st April, 1958 and it consists of seven *Halkas*. The total population is 40,415 in 9,787 families. There are 8 *Gram Panchayats* in the block. The two rivers Mahananda and its tributary Donk run through the major part of this area. River Ramjan also affects the village during rainy season. The soil is sandy and the main crops are paddy and jute. The average rainfall is about 80".

Ganga-Darjeeling was the principal road but due to the transfer of its major part in West Bengal the local communication has been very much affected. Parts of villages Hasanpur and Patuwa have been transferred to West Bengal and river Sudhani acts as the boundary.

There is one carpentry-*cum*-production centre at village Chakla which imparts training to a number of local young men for carpentry work.

Kishanganj town is a part of this block and has been covered separately.

The block includes the town area where there are one Government charitable dispensary, one Dak Bungalow under District Board and schools for boys and girls. There are one Government and Public Middle girls' school and one college

There is an old cannon in the old Bhenadangi village which bears the name of 'Sarkar Bahmanyar Khan', a Commander of 5,000 soldiers' and a younger brother of the famous Moghul Saista Khan.

Two *hats*, one at Khagra and the other at Alamganj, two *bazars*, one at Gudri and at Kishanganj are held.

A very important fair, next to Sonepur is held at Khagra, which has been covered separately.

Kochadaman Block.—The area of this block is 105 square miles covering 150 villages. The annual demand, rent and cess is Rs. 20,313.00. The percentage of collection is 50.

This block came into existence in April 1957 and the first stage of community development will continue till March, 1962. The headquarters of the block is at village Kochadaman which is at a distance of about 18 miles from the subdivisional headquarters at Kishanganj. The nearest railway station is Kishanganj and there is no metalled road connecting Kochadaman to

Kishanganj. The area of the block has been divided into. 11 *Halkas.* Bahadurganj police-station has been divided into two *Anchals,* the southern portion is being covered by Kochadaman Block while the northern portion is covered by Bahadurganj North Block.

There are 17 *Gram Panchayats* in this block. At the end of 1960 the Block Development Officer had reported that the contribution of the *Mukhiyas* was not satisfactory.

Owing to the inaccessibility of the area no important project such as rural electrification or opening up of metalled communications has been taken up. Information about improved agricultural practices are being diffused. At Barijan village there is an image of Vishnu curved out on a black stone 60" × 6" standing on a lotus. The figure has a sacred thread and a sword tied to the waist. Images of some godesses are carved on the same piece of stone round the main image. There is a popular temple of Shiva at Andhasoor.

Regular *hats* are held at Bishanpur, Barbatta, Sontha, Alta, Haldi Khora, Kochgarh, Modho, Tena and Deramari. Bishanpur *hat* is one of the biggest in the district and an important centre for trade in jute and paddy. *Melas* are held at Bishanpur (November and December), Andhasoor (February and March), and Alta (during Durga Puja).

From communication point of view the area is rather inaccessible. There is not a single *pucca* road or railway line in this area. The only conveyances possible are bullock-carts or bicycles. It is only during dry season that some of the villages may be approached by jeep. During rainy season boats can go to some of the parts. The villages of Bowaldah, Nazarpur, Bishanpur, Haldikhora and Sontha have a population of more than 2,000.

Regarding medical facilities there is one District Board dispensary at Haldikhora.

The block needs opening up and communications will facilitate trade and commerce.

Manihari Block.—Manihari Block has an area of 56,004.85 acres covered by 56 villages. The total demand annually comes to Rs. 1,50,500 and the collection rate during 1959-60 was 67 per cent. The block started functioning since October, 1957. There are 12 *Halkas* in the block Seven *Halkas* are covered by *Gram Panchayats* while the rest are under Union Board.

About 8 per cent of the total population comes from tribal classes. Among old sites mention may be made of one church, one mosque and one *Pir Pahar* at Manihari.

There is a good market at Manihari while *hats* are held at Mahuar, Baghmara, Manihari, Laxmipur, Nawabganj, Kumaripur, Mednipur and Kajigaon.

Manihari is connected by train between Katihar and Manihari *Ghat* railway stations from where one can go across the Ganga by steamer to Sakrigali *Ghat* railway station and then by train to Sahebganj on loop line. There was a *kutcha* road from Manihari to Katihar. This road is being metalled and bus services will be available very soon.

The block needs opening up.

Narpatganj Development Block.—The area of this block is 149 square miles and covers 65 villages. The total revenue demand is Rs. 2,31,960.41 and the percentage of collection during 1959-60 was 55.

The block was started in June, 1956. It forms a common boundary with Morang (Nepal) for 12 miles in the north while on the west it touches with the district of Saharsa.

The area covered by the block was ravaged by the streams of the Kosi river till the first decade of the 20th century. The Kosi has further receded towards the west and the area is now Kosi-free. The soil is mostly sandy and paddy and jute are the main crops.

Kosi barrage at Bhimnagar will irrigate the southern and northern portions of the block. A number of *bundhs* and *pynes* have been constructed under the minor irrigation programme. The construction of Kosi access road from Bathnaha to Birpur which runs through this block and the Forbesganj-Narpatganj P. W. D. Road solved the problem of communication of the block to some extent. The 18 *Gram Panchayats* of the block so far started are reported to be functioning well and the public contribution towards the development schemes is coming in.

The percentage of tribals in the block is only 1.5 scattered in four villages and they are mostly Dhangars and Oraons. Some wells have been specially sunk for them.

There are two State dispensaries, one at Narpatganj headquarters and the other at Nawabganj. A road from northern portion of Bela to the southern portion of Mirdol about 36 miles in length will be of great help. Now there is only a *kutcha* road. This road will serve the villages Bela, Basamatia,

Maheshpatti, Ghurna, Anchara, Narpatganj, Nathpur, Fattehpur, Pithoura and Mirdol. There are three health sub-centres. There is a Dak Bungalow at Narpatganj. There are a number of *hats* and *melas* under this block.

As regards dispensaries, there are only three—one at Thakurganj which serves an area of 8 miles, second at Pauakhali serving an area of 10 square miles and the third at Churli serving an area of 6 to 7 square miles.

This *Anchal* has two Dak Bungalows—one is at Thakurganj and the other is at Pauakhali. There is a High school at Thakurganj.

There are three husking and oil crushing mills in running order and also other two running mills are at Galgalia. The output is consumed locally and the surplus is sent outside. The main crops are jute, tobacco and paddy. Jute and tobacco are purchased by agents, sub-agents and are exported to Calcutta. Similarly paddy is purchased and sent to the mills within the district including the local mill owners.

The main business of the merchants besides trade and commerce is to lend money on exorbitant rate of interest during slack agricultural season and money is also advanced on standing crops such as jute, paddy and tobacco. The price of commodities is fixed on the date of advancement.

Palasi Anchal.—The area of this *Anchal* is 91 sq. miles and covers 107 villages. The total revenue including cess is Rs. 1,60,135.50 and Rs. 59,769.00 from *sairat* demand which fluctuates (annually). The percentage of annual collection in 1959-60 was 50.

Before 11th April, 1958, it was a part of Araria Circle but since it is an independent unit, it forms a part of Araria Revenue *thana* having police-station at Palasi. Recently this *Anchal* has been declared as a pre-extension block.

Under local development work programme, only 24 tube-wells have been constructed and no other projects have been taken up.

There are 18 notified *Gram Panchayats*. There is no permanent market or trade centre. Dharamganj *mela* has a big turnover of commodities. Nepali ponies and dogs are sold there. There are no local industries.

Communication is bad. The condition of the district or Local Board roads is unsatisfactory. One new road running from Jokihat to Teragachh via Palasi is under construction.

Three villages, Dehri, *thana* no. 159, Balua Kaliaganj, *thana* no. 144 and Chahatpur, *thana* no. 135, have population of more than 2,000. The only District Board dispensary of village Mohania, *thana* no. 144 is two miles away from Palasi There is only one High school at village Sohender, *thana* no. 96.

Pranpur Development Block.—The area of this block is 54,028 acres covering 111 villages. The revenue demand was Rs. 84,881 and the annual collection was Rs. 46,054 during 1959-60, i.e., 63 per cent.

The block was set up on the 14th October 1955. It has no metalled road. A District Board unmetalled road leads from Katihar to Pranpur.

The area is affected by annual flood. About 20 per cent of the population is of aboriginals. There are 17 *Gram Panchayats.*

In Roshna area the people of Deohiya caste do the *chatai* (bamboo mat) weaving work. An industrial co-operative society has been established for its development. In this area some silk is also produced.

There are 10 *hats*, namely, Roshna, Mansahi, Basttaul, Baina, Kehunia, Madarpur, Mainanagar, Durgapur, Mohrampur and Sahja.

There are four villages, namely, Chitoiya, Langanj, Teghra and Kehunia each having a population of more than two thousands.

There is only one District Board hospital at Mainanagar.

Purnea East Development Block.—The area of this block is 142.7 square miles and covers 192 villages. The total revenue is Rs. 3 lakhs and the percentage of annual collection is 50.

The block was started in 1956. Prior to the establishment of the block the number of schools was negligible. There are now one High school and several Upper and Primary schools. Tube-wells and surface wells have been constructed for drinking purposes.

This is a jute and paddy-growing area. The rural electrification scheme is under consideration. Besides, irrigational wells, several channels have been constructed on subsidiary basis with 50 per cent cost granted by the Government. Some schemes

for tube-well boring have also been taken up. The following metalled roads will be constructed during the Third Five-Year Plan:—

(1) Gulabbagh to Birpur village.

(2) Kasba to Dagarua *Hat*.

(3) Belauri to Sonaili.

It has been reported that the *Gram Panchayats* are not properly functioning in this block. The percentage of tribal population in this block is 6.1. Special facilities are arranged for their welfare. At village Maranga there is a centre for development of tribal dances. A team from here had been judged to be first for tribal dances at New Delhi in 1957 and was awarded a shield by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of the Indian Republic.

The cultivators are allergic to manual work and this is ascribed to climatic effect. Labourers are generally imported from outside in the district, viz., Bhagalpur, Monghyr and Darbhanga for agricultural work.

For the revival of cottage industries the indigenous artisans, viz., shoemakers, carpenters and blacksmiths are given grant-in-aid for the purchase of raw-materials.

The important *hats, melas,* markets and trade centres of this block are as follows:—

Hats.—Gulabbagh, Khuskibagh, Harda, Dagarna, Belauri and Ranipatra.

Melas.—Gulabbagh, Bhatgama, Majheli, Ragiganj and Belauri.

Market.—Gulabbagh.

Trade centre.—Gulabbagh.

Gulabbagh is one of the important jute *mandies* of Purnea and has been covered separately.

Purnea East Development Block.—There are 192 villages in this block with an area of 142.7 sq. miles. The total revenue of the block is about 3 lakhs and the annual collection is reported to be about 50 per cent.

The area predominantly is jute and paddy growing. Tube-wells and ordinary surface wells have been sunk to meet the drinking water problem. Several schools including one H. E. school have been established since the block was opened on the 14th October 1956.

For irrigation purposes a number of irrigation wells have been sunk. A few pumping sets have been distributed. Several channels have been constructed by the cultivators with 50 per cent cost granted by the Government. Two big *bundhs* with sluice gates are being taken up under the medium irrigation schemes.

The Block Development Officer reported that the village development programme and schemes were not receiving proper attention from the *Gram Panchayats* and no tangible achievements have been shown so far.

It is interesting to observe that about 6 per cent of the population of this block are tribals. Tribal welfare schemes by way of starting schools, sinking tube-wells and wells have been undertaken. The tribals are very poor and normally have uneconomic holdings. The welfare schemes have helped them considerably in upgrading themselves.

Labour problem is quite acute and labourers from Bhagalpur, Monghyr and Darbhanga are brought in for sowing and harvesting. The income from jute and paddy is mostly spent in *melas*. There is a deep apathy of the labouring classes of the block to do manual labour and they would not even go to Birpur and Bhimnagar where they would find plenty of work in Kosi Project. The important *hats* in this block are Gulabbagh, Khuskibagh, Harda, Dagarua, Belauri, Ranipatra. Gulabbagh is the largest *mela* in the district. The other *melas* are held at Bhatgama, Majheli, Ragiganj and Belauri. The important market centre is at Gulabbagh where a large turnover of jute is done.

Raniganj West Development Block.—The area of the block (Bhargama) is 92.14 sq. miles and covers 67 villages. The total revenue is Rs. 96,546.82, and the percentage of annual collection in 1959-60 was 48.

The block has been functioning since the 14th October, 1955. For rural water-supply a number of *pucca* wells and tube-wells have been sunk. So far as irrigation is concerned, 121 M.I. schemes have been completed. A number of wells have also been sunk for irrigation purposes.

There are 15 notified and one non-notified *Gram Panchayats* working in the block. The area is served by *hats* at Mahathwa, Bhargama, Khajuri, Charaiya, Birnagar and Hingua. There was a *hat* at Bhargama which has since ceased function. *Melas* are held at villages Shankarpur and Khajani. There used to be a *mela* at Bhatgama. There was a good market at Mahathwa.

Communications are bad. This *Anchal* is in Kosi belt. There is no *pucca* road in the block. There are only two *kutcha* District Board roads from Raniganj to Mahathwa and Raniganj to Khajuri and both are disconnected by village rivers Lachaba and Phariani. A few roads are very badly wanted in this area. Some of them are Bhargama to Raniganj with a bridge on the river Phariani, Bhargama to Banmankhi railway station and Bhargama to Simerbani extending up to village Pairwaha.

The villages of this area with a population of 2,000 and above are Bhargama, *thana* no. 65, Bhargama, *thana* no. 120, Paikpur, Manullahpatti, Raghunathpur, Sirsia, Hanumanganj, Jinagaon, Kushmoul, Simarbani, Shankarpur, Kalan, Khajuri, Khatch Baijnath and Birnagar.

There are three health sub-centres at Painpur, Mahathwa and Badmotra. There are a veterinary dispensary at Bhargama and four field dispensaries at Birnagar, Simarbani, Mahathwa and Badmotra.

There is no Dak Bungalow in the *Anchal*. There are four community halls completed at villages Birnagar, Sirsia Kalan, Mahathwa and Raghunathpur which may serve the purpose of Dak Bungalows.

Rupouli South Block.—This block (Rupouli) lies in Sadar subdivision. The area is 82 sq. miles and covers 55 villages. The total revenue in 1960 is—arrear Rs. 2,36,660.74 and current Rs. 1,60,625 only. The percentage of collection was—arrear 71 and current 19.4.

Till September, 1960 it was an *Anchal* but from 1st of November, 1960 it is functioning as an independent unit. There are 21 *Gram Panchayats*.

The percentage of tribals is about 10 and they are being provided with particular medical and irrigation facilities. The cultivators are trying to adopt and use the new methods and implements for the agricultural development. *Kargha* machine for the purpose of weaving cloth is the only cottage industry and it gives employment to villagers.

Dangraghat on Mahananda river on the border of the district has important inter-district trade with Bhagalpur. Big boats with merchandise pass through this *ghat*.

A road from Rupouli to Bijoyghat will help the communication and trade with Naugachhia and Bhagalpur. Another road is likely to be opened from Rupouli to Kursela via Tikapatti.

Terhagachh Development Block.—The area of this block is 71 sq. miles and covers 81 villages. The revenue is Rs. 4,23,911.48 and the percentage of collection during 1959-60 was 60.4.

The block was started in October, 1959., It has got various cottage industries like cloth weaving, *chatai* (bamboo mat) and basket making.

There is a temple at Deori village which is surrounded on three sides by Ratwa river and there is a mosque at Boegana.

There are *hats*, namely, Saibiganj, Fulbeni, Sunia, Bairi and Fatehpur, etc. There are two trade centres such as Saibiganj and Fulbeni from where paddy and *sal* wood are imported from Nepal.

There is a dispensary at Fulbeni and another at Benugarh (Homoeopathic) and a High school at Bilai Ganj.

Thakurganj Anchal.—The area of the *Anchal* (Thakurganj) is 143 square miles consisting of 134 villages divided into 12 *Halkas* and is covered by 18 *Gram Panchayats* The total revenue including cess and *sairat* is Rs. 4,10,203 and the average percentage of annual collection varies from 60 to 70

Previously it was partly within the jurisdiction of Islampur and Chopra Circles but it was managed by Circle Officer at Chopra. Chopra was included in West Bengal as a result of the recommendations of the State Reorganisation Committee The office was then shifted to Thakurganj. This *Anchal* is functioning since 1st of November, 1956

The *Gram Panchayats* are popular with the people. *Mukhiyas* do their best and particularly for the tribals whose population is roughly one per cent. The tribals are getting educational aids. There is no organised industry except villagers' local business in *chatti* making of jute, bamboo baskets, etc.

There has, however, been no remarkable improvement in agricultural economy.

There is one Shiva temple, the image of which is said to be the lengendary of King Birat's time. There are two elevated *tilhas* (mounds) at Bandarjhula said to be very old.

For marketing purposes there are 12 *hats*, 6 *melas* and 3 markets. Regarding trade centres, there is one at Pauakhali another at Thakurganj and the third one at Galgalia.

This *Anchal* has rivers and rivulets which change their courses every year. They travel down to the plains from the Himalayas and their offshoots create great havoc by destroying the *kutcha* roads during the rainy season. The construction of a *pucca* road with bridges will be an asset. The communication is maintained through the medium of country boats.

Jirangachh and Thakurganj (village Kanakpur) are the only two villages with a population of over 2,000 persons.

APPENDIX I.

CRIME STATISTICS FOR THE YEARS 1861, 1862; AND 1864 (SOURCE: OLD CORRESPONDENCE, VOLUMES IV, V, VII IN BHAGALPUR COLLECTORATE RECORD ROOM—POLICE STATEMENT FROM 1861 TO 1864 FOR BHAGALPUR DIVISION).

The area of the district is 5,712 sq. miles. The population given in the statement varies from 7,48,102 in 1861 to 10,00,000 in 1864.

Crime.	1861.		Average of 5 previous years		Increase.		Decrease.	
	Cases.	Persons.	Cases.	Persons.	Cases.	Persons.	Cases.	Persons
1. Offences against the persons.	687	1,288	601	1,048	86	239	.	..
2. Offences against the property with violence.	29	602	18	504	11	98	.	
3. Offences against the property without violence.	1,261	1,536	842	1,070	419	466	...	..
4. Malicious offences against property.	86	233	47	118	39	115	..	..
5. Forgery and offences against currency.	1	8		1	..	7	..	..
6. Miscellaneous offences	251	455	496	809	..	.	245	354

Crime.	1862.		Average of 5 previous years.		Increase.		Decrease.	
	Cases.	Persons.	Cases.	Persons.	Cases.	Persons.	Cases.	Persons
1. Offences against the persons.	724	1,810	597	1,048	127	762	..	..
2. Offences against the property with violence.	54	709	19	503	35	206	.	.
3. Offences against the property without violence.	1,033	1,622	701	952	332	670	..	..
4. Malicious offences against property.	50	137	6	20	44	117	..	..
5. Forgery and offences against currency.	6	19	..	..	6	19	..	..
6. Miscellaneous offences	567	1,312	684	1,188	..	133	117	..

APPENDIX II.

EXTRACT FROM MONTOGOMERY MARTIN'S "EASTERN INDIA", VOL. III, PAGES 704–706.

MARKET TOWNS IN PURANIYA.

Division I.—Haveli.

II. *Market Places.*—Chandnichok. Nuzurgunj. Alumgunj. Smithgunj. Nuginabag. Form the compact part of the town of Puraniya. • Maharajgunj. Bibigunj. Miyabazar. Khulifahchaok. Mohini. Sibgunj. Tamachgunj. Kasbahbasti. Phulwari. Ekamba. Bangjavari. Sangjheli. Sabdalpoor. Mathar. Belgachhi. Mahalvari. Patilwa. Rajgunj. Kaligunj. Gopalgunj or Belwari. Abdulnagar. Baidyanathgunj. Naya-Baidyanathgunj. Kajha or Ganespoor. Bhograha. Ekhtiyarpoor. Burhidhanghatta. Chanka Singga. Basetí. Baneli. Satbaheniya. Kawaiya. Bijliya. Julalgar.

II. *Dangrkhora.*—Sayefgunj. Bhongra. Bhagawanpoor. Kotubpoor. Lokhnavarı. Maharumpoor. Azimnagar. Kanal. Cotakpoor. Bhatan. Chhimna. Rousungunj. Rasulpoor. Jhamalparariya. Kamtiya. Soneli. Pharai. Mamdiya. Dhatta. Saoriya. Nathullagunj. Sibpoor. Kumalpoor.

III. *Gondwara.*—Gaurigunj. Kazibazar. Nawabgunj. Barari. Kangrhagola. Kantanagar. Bhawanipoor. Syamapoor. Musapoor. Alinagar. Sahara. Khaga. Hangsini. Masunda. Putiya.

IV. *Dhamdaha.*—Dhamdaha. Garel. Krishnapoor. Aligunj. Dharraha. Azmngunj. Maharajgunj. Sibgunj. Rupni. Belagunj. Bararaha. Maldiha. Mahadipoor at Bhawanipoor. Rampoor Pariyat. Pharsun. Vernagar. Parsagari. Rekabgunj. Malijagat.

V. *Dimiya.*—Rampur. Rajgunj. Nathpoor. Sahebgunj. Motipoor. Doulutpoor. Dharam Kamra. Bhawanipoor. Mahadipoor. Bhagawatpoor Kathiya. Kusahar. Bandeli. Raghunathpoor. Bahadurgunj or Pangrhpariya. Terhi Adarha. Mahamudgunj. Ranigunj. Parsagari. Nawalgunj.

VI. *Matiyari.*—Matiyari. Dipal. Sonapoor. Mahaswari. Sahariya. Madhubani. Megha. Bauka. Kursakhata. Ghoraghat. Soraha. Parbaha. Putiya. Gunamatiyari. Kazergunj. Mahulagunj. Hengna. Aurahi. Merzapoor. Paysara. Ranigunj. Kharsai. Simarbani. Devigunj. Dumuriya. Virsinggi. Sayefgunj. Merzapoor. Nawabgunj. Garhiya.

VII. *Arariya.*—Arariya. Pharasut. Rampoor. Madanpoor, Bochi. Garaha. Batarvani. Mahishakul. Madhura, Patengna. Sahasmal. Phulwari. Jamuya. Dabraha. Kalnawa. Bardaha. Kankahar. Aulavari. Kadamkola. Kanphuliya. Orlaha. Palasi. Maynakarraha. Pechli. Musuriya. Vaghmara. Darsana. Baluya. Borel. Katuya. Jogendra. Mirgunj. Chilniya. Kusiyargunj. Beloya. Barasdengga. Chakui. Dariya.

VIII. *Bahadurgunj.*—Bahadurgunj. Jhinakata. Kujar. Rupni. Kairi. Satal Sontha. Sohandar. Bara. Pachhara. Sohangang. Hasan. Rasulgunj. Baryan. Gopalpoor. Natuyapara. Kanaiyavari. Hematnagar. Shahpoor. Kuthi. Chinggar. Chayengunj. Kharudaha. Hazari. Bhatka. Elahigunj. Semeswar. Tulsiya. Garganj. Ranggapani, Singgimari. Haroyadangga. Padampoor. Karwamani Kata. Kandharpadangga. Dhantola. Subudangga. Bhawanigunj. Jhapartal. Kalikadangga. Dhubniya. Govindhagunj. Phulwari. Bairiya. Aligunj. Patharghati. Matiyari. Kangchanvari. Bariya. Dhumgar. Sisugachhi. Saiud Pokhar. Muraripoor. Muzkuri. Mirgunj. Chengga or Koborbagi.

IX. *Udhrail.*—Rasulgunj. Udhrail. Saiudpoor. Futehpoor Aligunj. Fakirgunj. Matikhongra. Chauriya. Ramgunj. Dhulavari Hoseyngunj. Chilamari. Sargora. Bornai. Kaliyagunj. Baluvari. Mundamala. Dhumgar. Sonapoor. Futehabad. Ghoramara. Radhagunj. Chopra. Prangunj. Bhersa. Bamankumar. Masiderbazar. Pirgunj. Nuzurpoor.

X. *Krishnagunj.*—Kotubgunj. Pangjipara. Khagar. Jhaljhali. Tenggarmani. Khojasur. Aligunj. Mokampokhar. Gorha. Khagra. Ranigunj. Goyalganj. Line Bazar. Parihalpoor. Maharajgunj. Dewangunj. Khodaigunj. Bhogdabar. Chhaygachhi. Kharkhari. Motihara. Damarvari. Baldiyaghata. Aligunj. Dhantola. Golabray. Rampoor. Balugora. Pirgunj.

XI. *Dulalgunj.*—Dulalgunj. Harrigachhi. Mahinagar. Sukkurpoor. Kaligunj. Kanaiya Rasulgunj. Salupra. Karhi. Motalpoor. Belgachhi. Soulutgunj. Hariharpoor. Fakirtuli. Amoyar. Deuri. Baisi. Simalvari. Gostera. Aroriya. Baysa. Manggalpoor. Sisauna. Durmalpoor. Sirsi. Kilpara. Chaupoor. Bararo. Aulavari. Sibgunj. Sakma. Geruya. Nawabganj.

XII. *Nehnagar.*—Dobkol. Sundul Bibi. Rautara or Asnempoor Begma or Bazargang. Digalganj. Kadergunj. Rasa Khoya. Bhapla. Fakirgunj. Khatravari. Gandal. Mahamudpoor. Kansao, Balarampoor. Bongchagari. Bighor. Tarapoor. Berakhor. Banggorara. Kotahar. Khidorpoor. Bibi Sitli. Barsai. Imadpoor. Nehnagar. Kochavari. Bhawaninagar.

XIII. *Kharwa.*—Dumrail. Nathurapoor. Janipoor. Pariya. Kaligunj. Paharpoor. Nagoya. Abadpoor. Nonator. Mahanandapoor. Bheba. Kharwa.

XIV. *Bholahat.*—Chaudala. Daldali. Tangtipara. Bahadurpoor. Bholahat. Chauarirbazar. Kongarpoor. Govindhapoor. Maheshmardini. Nischintapoor. English Bazar. Gayespoor. Nimesaray. Arefpoor. Tipajani. Kotwali. Kanaipoor. Nayghariya. Barakol. Pirgunj. Pokhariya. Kamalavari. Nawadhah. Amanigunj.

XV. *Sibgunj.*—Sibgunj. Baraghariya. Barabazar Pokhariya. Barbana. Poragunj. Kansatgunj. Motaaligunj. Mahadipoor. Guyamalti. Sukarvari. Chandidaspoor. Sahebgunj. Saiud Kamalpoor. Jotkasi.

XVI. *Kaliyachak.*—Kaliyachak Sultanganj. Shershahi. Golabnagar. Mazumpoor. Gadaisulimpoor. Bangsvariya. Trimohani. Balupoor. Hoseynpoor. Mahadevpoor. Melik. Mohanpoor. Masumgunj. Shahjadpoor or Enaetpoor. Manikchak or Narayanpoor Rushiya. Paikan. Julalpoor or Narayanpoor. Tangra. Madiya. Bangsgara. Rabibariya. Chandipoor. Burkuttabad. Ganggapanth or Chak Kumaluddinpoor. Savefgunj. Chandpoor. Chandpoorgunj.

XVII. *Gorguribah.*—Samda. Mathurapoor. Kumedpoor or Nurpoor. Araidangga. Ekidutnagar or Mirzadpor. Kuraliya. Barhal or Baikunthapoor. Kharampoor. Kalitala. Budhwari Gorson, Malitipoor. Sangjib. Cohalpoor. Devigunj. Kola. Kapsiya. Tulasihatta. Ghoraghati. Gahela. Barahat. Khuriyal. Khopakati. Harachandpoor. Kurimgunj. Lahirajan. Gorguribah. Balurpar. Khidargunj. Pungthiya Lakshmangang Maniknagar.

XVIII. *Manihari.*—Manihari. Torushbana. Kangtakos. Guyagachhi. Bakurgunj. Manshahi. Baidyanathpoor. Baliya. Lalgola. Kasichak or Bhairavgunj. Basantapoor. Nawabgunj. Dhurarhi. Chuniya. Rampoor.

ENCLOSURE I.

THE INDIGO INDUSTRY.*

HISTORY.

The manufacture of indigo has been carried on for more than a century in Purnea. The first mention of it, as far as can be traced, occurs in a letter, dated the 16th January 1788, from the Collector to the Board of Revenue, in which, among other non-official Europeans resident in the district, he mentions a Mr. Coustard, "a quiet, industrious man, proprietor of a small indigo manufacture". Indigo was probably, however, a well-known crop before that time, for in the following year the Collector made a detailed report on the manner of its cultivation. He stated that the cultivation was carried on by a system of advances, at rates varying from 8 annas to Rs. 3-2-0 per *bigha* of 2,400 square *haths* or cubits, according to the class of soil. In return for such advances the cultivator agreed to hand over the land ploughed and weeded to the planter, who merely sowed the seed. When it is remembered that at this period rice was often so cheap and abundant, that it did not pay the cost of harvesting it, it is easy to understand that indigo cultivation spread rapidly.

It appears that Nilganj, a few miles south of the town of Purnea, was the first factory built, probably about 1775. The vats were then made of wood, and the boilers of copper. The new industry seems to have attracted much attention amongst the people, and pieces of the plant are said to have been circulated amongst the village headmen as curiosities. The Kolasi Factory in *pargana* Katihar was erected a few years afterwards. Thus, the cultivation seems at first to have progressed southwards towards the low lands subject to annual inundation from the Ganges. It was next extended to the northern *pargana* of Nathpur, now in Bhagalpur, Mr. Smith, whose name is still preserved in one of the Purnea bazars, taking a lease of the whole *pargana* from Government and erecting factories. Later, he carried on operations to the south, and between 1800—07 held four factories in Gondwara. This Mr. Smith appears to have been an enterprising planter, to whom the district owes much.

*This is a verbatim reproduction of Chapter IX of *Purnea District Gazetteer* by L. S. S. O'Malley, published in 1911. Although indigo cultivation has now disappeared it played a great role in the economy of the district and the chapter has an importance (P. C. B. C.).

Establishing himself at Nathpur, he had that place greatly improved, the roads widened and straightened, and the jungle cut down. He induced workmen to come down from Nepal, and, according to Buchanan Hamilton, it was owing to his laudable exertions that the greater part of the brick houses in the town of Purnea were erected. We also find that he introduced the European potato, which by 1810 had come into general use near Purnea.

Further information regarding the industry is given by Buchanan Hamilton about the year 1810. In the south-east of the district there were 17 factories, of which a number were under the management of a Mr. Ellerton of "Guyamati"; in Gondwara there were 10 factories, of which four belonged to Mr. Smith of Nathpur; and in the rest of the district there were no less than 50 European factories, but several of them were small and in a bad state. There were also seven factories held by two Hindus and one "native Portuguese", and about 1,000 *bighas* were cultivated for "the original native manufacture", which was confined to the eastern skirts of the district near the Nagar river, where no European manufacturer had settled. Buchanan Hamilton gives some interesting particulars regarding the cultivation. "The land" he says, "on which indigo is raised is in general poor and low rented, and, where it is the only crop, does not pay more than 4 annas a *bigha* or one-quarter of the produce. Still, however, the rice is no doubt a more profitable cultivation: and in fact, the farmers (except on the poor sandy land that will not produce rice) are exceedingly backward to undertake or continue the cultivation: and many of the landlords discourage their tenantry from engaging in it by every means in their power. The manufacturers seem to incur a greater expense than they do in Ronggopoor (Rangpur). Their buildings are mere expensive, and they keep an enormous establishment of oxen and carts for carrying home the plant. They almost all cultivate more or less, these cattle being idle at the ploughing season. The land which they cultivate being carefully ploughed and weeded is vastly more productive than what is neglected by the natives, and were the indigo planters more generally men who could attend to the details of agriculture, and were they allowed to rent land contiguous to their works in a quantity sufficient to supply them entirely with seed, I have no doubt that the land would be vastly more productive, and failures from the season less common. The habits and experience, however, of the greater part would render any undertaking of that kind ruinous; and there are strong reasons for the prohibition that exists against their acquiring such property."

As regards the outturn and area under cultivation, Buchanan Hamilton stated that the outturn of the four factories belonging to Mr. Smith in Gondwara was 2,662 factory maunds (74 2/3 lbs.) in eight years and that the average annual outturn of all the ten factories in that tract was 670 maunds per annum The area under cultivation in Gondwara is not stated. In the south east of the district he estimated that 74,000 *bighas* were under cultivation, and that 2,516 maunds were produced in seven years The total amount produced by the remaining 50 factories would, he estimated, average about 3,000 maunds, and the land under actual cultivation would be about 60,000 *bighas*.

The industry appears to have been in a very flourishing condition about 30 years ago, for returns specially prepared for the Statistical Account of Bengal in 1876 show that there were 18 concerns with 59 factories, an average cultivation of 81 077 *bighas*, and an outturn of 4,667 to 4,767 maunds per annum The exact area of the *bigha* applicable for measuring the land is not stated, but it is probable that very nearly 50 000 acres were under cultivation The following table gives details of the industry in that year; the figures showing the area under cultivation and the outturn, are the averages for the preceding 10 years

Concern	Factories	Owner	Area in *bighas*.	Outturn in maunds
1	2	3	4	5
Barara* ..	Barara .. Gokulnagar .. Maharajganj .. Maikant .. Parmanandpur	Mr. Mc. Allister*	4 000	200
Bhogaon ..	Bhogaon ..	Rai Lakshmipat Singh.	2,065	105
Bhawara ..	Bhawara .. Dilawari .. Jotramrai .. Sibganj ..	R. Walker	6,000	300
Deoria ..	Deoria ..	Mr. Bentley	1,000	80

*Locally this concern is referred to as the Maharajganj concern.

Concern.	Factories.	Owner.	Area in *bighas*.	Outturn in maunds.
1	2	3	4	5
Dharara ..	Dharara ..	E. De Souza	900	60
Gangaldahi	Nathpur ..	...	100	..
Gidwas ..	Gidwas ..	Rai Lakshmipat Singh.	690	50
Gondwara ..	Bahora ..	H Cave	9,194	925
	Debipur ..			
	Dumar ..			
	Gonria ..			
	Jaunia ..			
	Kafar ..			
	Khawaspur ..			
	Kotha ..			
	Nisendra ..			
Kaltai ..	Bargawan ..	...	300	35
	Phusyan ..			
Kolasi ..	Katihar ..	G.W.Shillingford	5,000	500
	Sambalpur ..			
Lalpur ..	Lalpur ..	Miss Gouldhauke	900	75
Mahendrapur	Dinapur ..	F. Cruise	3,000	300
	Mahendrapur			
	Mathaur ..			
	Sanhosbalia ..			

Concern.	Factories.	Owner.	Area in *bighas*.	Outturn in maunds.
1	2	3	4	5
Mainanagar ..	Baina .. Kaliganj .. Mahadebpur .. Mainanagar ..	G. Burnell	6,000	300
Manshai ..	Kirpur .. Manshai ..	C. A. Shilligford	5,537	299
Nilganj ..	Banbagh .. Bishunpur .. Kaja .. Khaga .. Masaua .. Mirzapur .. Nilganj .. Putilwa .. Sirsi ..	R. S. Pyne	13,913	675
Pirganj ..	Pirganj ..	H. Cruise	1,000	100
Sahara ..	Hansaili .. Koasi .. Sahara ..	J. L. Shillingford	4,000	350 to 400
Sultanpur ..	Amona .. Forbesabad .. Jalalgarh .. Khopda .. Maisakhul .. Rampur .. Rohikpur .. Sultanpur ..	A. J. Forbes	17,568	383

In the preceding table the figures showing the outturn are the averages for 10 years, but, as a matter of fact, the outturn was a very uncertain quantity. In the three years 1873—75 it was 7,345 maunds, 2,203 maunds and 7,750 maunds, respectively; and it was estimated in 1877 that in an average year from 5,000 to 7,000 maunds of indigo were produced, the average price being

Rs. 219 per factory maund of 74 lbs., 10 oz. In the year last mentioned the area of land under indigo cultivation was 67,000 to 70,000 acres, and there were 34 concerns in the district, with 31 outworks, of which only three were owned and managed by Indians. It was calculated that as much as 10 lakhs were annually expended by the different factories, but there are no figures showing what capital was invested in buildings, machinery and land. In some years the profit might, it was said, be as much as 100 per cent, but on an average over a number of years the profit would not amount to over 20 or 25 per cent

From the following table for 1886-87 will be apparent that the industry declined greatly within the next 10 years, there being 28 factories with an area of about 43,450 *bighas* under cultivation and an outturn of about 2,481 maunds.

Concern.	Factories.	Proprietor.	Area in *bighas*.	Outturn in Mds. srs.
1	2	3	4	5
Banbagh ..	Banbagh ..	W. J. Pyne ..	600	9-13
	Bishunpur ..			
Bhogaon ..	Bhogaon ..	C. J. Shillingford	†	†
Bhawara ..	Bhawara ..	R. C. Walker ..	1,182	44-1
	Dilawari ..			
Gokulnagar	Gokulnagar..	Bishun Chand..	1,350	16-14
Gondwara ..	Bahora ..	J. Thomas & Co.	22,093	1,697-2[illegible]
	Debipur ..			
	Dumar ..			
	Gonria ..			
	Hansaili ..			
	Jaunia ..			
	Kabar ..			
	Kaja ..			
	Khaga ..			
	Khawaspur..			
	Korha ..			
	Kuari ..			
	Nisendra ..			
	Pirganj ..			
	Sahara ..			

**Statistical Reporter*, 1877.

†Returns are not available.

Concern.	Factories.	Proprietor.	Area in *bighas.*	Outturn in Mds. srs.
1	2	3	4	5
Kajra ..	Kajra ..	G. J. Burnell ..		
Kolasi .	Kolasi ..	F.A. Shillingford	3,210† acres	310·0†
	Semapur ..			
Mahendrapur	Dasiarpur ..	R. P. Irwin ..	1,137	13·0
	Mahendrapur			
Mainanagar..	Baina ..	Williams and Greenhill	5,121	122·28
	Kaliganj ..			
	Mainanagar..			
Manihari ..	Manihari ..	E. Taylor ..		
Manshai ..	Kirpur ..	A.J. Shillingford	5,348	242·12
	Manshai ..			
Sultanpur ..	Sultanpur ..	A. J. Forbes ..	3,409	2·41

The most interesting event in the recent history of the industry has been a combined strike against growing indigo for the Gondwara concern on the part of the ryots in the Korha and Damdaha thanas. This concern, including 16 factories and outworks, was held on lease from the Maharaja of Darbhanga by the firm of Messrs. J. Thomas and Company from 1888 to 1899. When the term of the lease was drawing to a close, a movement was started against growing indigo, apparently in order to prevent the firm securing a renewal of the lease. This movement, it is noticeable, originated in an area where no indigo was ever grown, but spread to the indigo-growing area. In these circumstances, the firm gave up the lease, and the Darbhanga Raj resumed direct possession. The Darbhanga Raj demanded an

*Returns are not available.

†Average of seven years.

enhancement of rents as well as the continuance of the cultivation of indigo; and the ryots refused in a body to comply with its demands. They alleged that they had agreed to an enhancement on condition that they would no longer have to grow indigo, and claimed that the double demand was a breach of faith. This charge was denied by the Raj, which declared that no such promise had ever been made The tension which ensued resulted in many acts of violence on the part of the ryots; and matters only quieted down when additional police were quartered and special constables appointed in the disaffected area, and after various concessions had been made by the Maharaja.

This anti-indigo movement is described by Mr. Byrne as follows in the Settlement Report:-"It originated in a village near Bhawanipur Rajdham in thana Damdaha where an old man, Raja Chand of Kishanpur, realized that it was the only means of attacking the Darbhanga Raj, when its local officials began to insist on the cultivation of indigo, in spite of promises already made that indigo cultivation would cease when the lease of the concern to Messrs. Thomas and Company fell in. Raja Chand had never grown indigo, and no indigo was cultivated within 8 or 10 miles of that locality, but he feared that all rent-free lands were about to be forcibly resumed, and all excess lands assessed at a high rate. When the struggle was practically over—to his credit be it said that he and his sons were faithful to their oaths to the last, though all their confederates had come to terms with the Raj—he explained his attitude by saying "I was like a deer pursued by Raj Hounds. I fled for refuge to an indigo field."

The following is a list of the factories still (1908) manufacturing indigo. The most important is the Gondwara concern, which had an outturn of 31,711 maunds in the nine years ending in 1899, or 3,523 maunds per annum, and of 12,605 maunds in 1900–07 or 1,576 maunds per annum. The industry shows greater vitality than in other districts of North Bihar, probably because indigo can be manufactured at a cheaper rate; but even so several factories have had to close recently, and though the area shown in the recent settlement as under indigo was 20,752 acres, it diminished to 16,500 acres in 1908.

Concern.	Factories.
Bhawara ..	Bhawara.
Bhogaon ..	Bhogaon.
	Jagannathpur.

Concern.	Factories.
Gondwara	Bahora.
	Debipur.
	Dumar.
	Gonria.
	Jaunia.
	Kabar.
	Kaja.
	Korha.
	Mirganj
	Nisendra
	Sahara.
Mainanagar	Baina.
	Kaliganj.
	Mainanagar.
Mathurapur (in Malda)	Kaladiara
Manshai	Kirpur.
	Manshai.
Sirsi	Sirsi

It is worthy of note that the Purnea planters have invented or been the first to use several improved processes. The first wheel beater for oxidising the beating vat was designed by a Purnea planter, named Mr. R. Cruise, and was erected at the Dilawari factory in 1841. The first screw propeller for beating, patented by Mr. Michea, was put up at Pirganj factory in 1882. Mr. F. Shillingford of Kolashi patented an improved boiler in 1887 and also introduced lever presses; while Mr. Hill, an assistant in the Gondwara concern, is said to have originated the idea of bruising the plant before steeping.

Relations of Planters and Ryots.

The following extracts from different reports and articles will show that the relations of planters and ryots in Purnea have, on the whole, been satisfactory, largely owing to the conditions of cultivation in this district being different from those obtaining

elsewhere. On this subject Mr. G. Shillingford, Managing Proprietor of the Kolasi concern, wrote in 1872:—"This district differs from other districts in that the cultivation of indigo is based more on the principle of free trade than elsewhere. In other words, it pays the *ryot* to cultivate indigo in Purnea, and he does so of his own free-will". He then enumerated the advantages of the Purnea system:—" (1) During the months that indigo lands are being prepared and sown, no other crop can be grown; (2) three-fourths of the indigo is sown on lands from which a crop has already been reaped; (3) in half of the lands, rice can be sown after the indigo has been cut—thus the *ryot* gets three crops in one year off half his lands at least, mustard invariably preceding the indigo; (4) on all the *diara* lands only one crop can be grown, and that is indigo, for they go under water in July, remain under water till January, and are not fit for ploughing till March; (5) the factory assists the cultivators by giving them bullocks, ploughs, money to pay off their *mahajans* or grain-lenders, and money for weeding. The bullocks they keep for good, and cultivate their other crops with them. The money we advance bears no interest during the season in which the advances are made." The Collector in 1873 endorsed these statements to a large extent. "The planters", he wrote, "are for the most part gentlemen who have been born and bred in this district and who are consequently known to, and understood by, the *ryots*. Either the land here does not require, or, at all events, is not considered to require, so much weeding and care as is given to it in other districts either in Bengal or Bihar. At the time indigo is sown near the Ganges no other crop will grow. It will also grow on land from which mustard has been reaped. For these reasons, no difficulty is ever found by the planters in getting *ryots* to take advances. Some gentlemen who posses interest in land sublet it on condition that the rent is paid in indigo. Petty differences occasionally arise between planters and their *ryots*, such as always will crop up in all business transactions; but I have seen none of that universal disaffection and discontent which prevailed for years in Bengal."

This account is confirmed by that given in the *Statistical Reporter* in 1877, which is as follows:—"There seems little doubt that cultivation of indigo in this district is remunerative to the cultivator. Much of the sowing and cutting goes on during a time when no other crop can be sown or cut. Indigo, again, is often sown on land from which other crops have been cut, and rice is also sometimes sown on land after the indigo is cut. On some low *char* lands nothing but indigo can be grown. It is believed that under these circumstances, and if the *ryot* is fairly

paid by measurement for his crop, indigo cultivation proves amply remunerative to him Besides the village cultivation, every factory gives permanent employment to a large number of men as peons, blacksmiths, carpenters, thatchers, gardeners, ploughmen, and ordinary coolies All classes of *ryots* cultivate indigo; some cultivate as much as 100 *bighas*, some as little as a quarter of a *bigha* The planters moreover, assist their *ryots*, in many ways, by giving them bullocks and ploughs, and by advancing money for which they take no interest as long as indigo is grown for them."

In 1888, again, Mr F Shillingford wrote —"We have never found any difficulty in getting the *ryots* to grow the crop During the last five years in this concern, I find that they have sown on an average 33 per cent of land in excess of the quantity they were under contract to cultivate The better class of *ryots* sow double and triple the area they contract for and many sow indigo for this factory without any contract or without taking any money whatsoever towards its cultivation, we merely supplying the seed At the neighbouring factory of Manshai one farmer alone sows about 200 acres, and he does not hold or live on factory lands The price was raised 25 per cent in 1880, and first, second and third cuttings are paid for at the same rate I have known 110 bundles of first and second cuttings obtained from one acre of land, and the field had been only roughly sown and never weeded Rent for the class of land on which indigo is sown is nominal being from eight annas to one rupee per acre Moreover agricultural labour is scarce, and the cultivation of indigo consists of little more than a mere scratching of the ground "

Another favourable account of the happy relations existing between the planters and the ryots was given in 1889 by Mr H G. Cooke, the then Collector 'So far,' he wrote, "as I can learn, indigo cultivation is extremely popular with the cultivators, and during the past three years I have not heard a single complaint against any of the old established factories of the district Experience has shown that ordinarily patient, law-abiding cultivator of Purnea can turn on occasion, but neither by lawless violence nor by a resort to the courts have I ever found the indigo cultivator of Purnea set himself in opposition to the old planting families of the district This I attribute to various causes, among which may be mentioned the kindly and patriarchal relations that are maintained between these old Purnea planter families and the *ryots*. Such planters are, I believe, the *ryot's* best friends; they assist him in his difficulties with advice and money, and are deservedly looked up to and respected for their

fair dealing and kindness. Added to this, the system itself is a sound one, and no coercion is necessary, as it pays the *ryot* to grow plant to sell to the factory in whose *dihat* his lands lie. Most of the indigo plant produced for manufacture is grown by *ryots* on their own lands, the plant being delivered at the factory and paid for after being measured by means of a chain. That the rates paid are remunerative is shown by the circumstance that a *ryot* very often plants a great deal more land with indigo than he has covenanted to do. He receives an advance of two rupees a *bigha* for perhaps 10 *bighas*, and of his own accord sows 20 or more *bighas*, which seems to prove that in these instances at least, the *ryots* derive more profit from disposing of an indigo crop to the planter than from raising any other produce.

"The only fact that differentiates the system from a theoretically perfect one is that the *dihat* system exists, and that each planter enjoys a monopoly of the right of contract for supplying indigo within certain well recognized boundaries, which boundaries are generally faithfully observed. A *ryot* who rises indigo must deliver it to the planter within whose *dihat* or monopoly area he holds his land, but against this it may be said that the planters are at perfect liberty to enter into any agreement for their common benefit and no *ryot* is in any way forced to cultivate indigo while those who elect to do so, enter into a regular agreement with the planter and accept an advance from him. The monopoly if monopoly it can be called, rests on the good faith of the planters among themselves, it is not that a *ryot* cannot sell his indigo or demand an advance from a planter other than the one in whose *dihat* his land lies, but that no other planters would buy his produce or give him an advance. So that if the system is not theoretically quite perfect in practice it works well."*

CULTIVATION

The following is a description of the methods of cultivation. In October, what are technically known as the settlements take place. The cultivators attend at the factory office, where they are paid up all that may be due to them for indigo delivered during the preceding season, and take advances for the ensuing crop. The agreement sometimes covers as long a term as ten years, and it generally binds the *ryot* (1) to grow indigo on a certain quantity of land, exclusively for the particular factory making the advance, (2) not to sell the indigo plant produced on this land to any other factory, (3) to get the land ready in proper

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time for sowing; (4) to sow it when ready; (5) to weed it at the proper time, with the aid of the factory servants; (6) to cut the plant when required to do so; (7) to deliver a certain quantity of bundles per rupee. The planter binds himself (1) to take any seed the plant may produce, before or after cutting, at a fixed rate; (2) to make good any loss the cultivator may suffer from wilful negligence by the factory servants; and in most cases, (3) to pay for the carriage of the plant either by cart or boat to the factory. In November and December, as soon as the settlements have been completed, or during the settlements, should they be prolonged, the planter measures the field for which his ryots have contracted, in order to see that he has the exact quantity and proper description of land.

In some places sowing begins in October on the higher alluvial lands, after the floods retire and while the fields still retain much moisture. The seed is sown broadcast, and no ploughing is requisite. This system is called *khakti*. In most factories, however, no land can be sown till February, when the *magh* or *maghat* sowing takes place on high land from which the *maghat tori* or red mustard crop has been reaped, and on other high land which retains its moisture. At the end of February lower alluvial lands, in March the higher riverside or *diara* lands, which are subject to inundation, and in April the lower lands of this description are sown. The planter generally waits for rain before he sows; but sometimes he adopts the method called *harana* or *kharan*, in which there are many successive ploughings and harrowings until the soil is thoroughly dried and pulverized, when the seed is scattered broadcast and a favourable shower is awaited. In some parts of the district very high land is not sown till the end of April, or even till within a few weeks of the setting in of the rains. In the south of the district, if there is a good fall of rain of Baisakh (April-May), the cultivators sow fields, from which *purbi tori* or white mustard has been harvested, with *baisakhi* indigo. This crop is raised by the ryots in what is termed *fazil* cultivation, i.e., they do not contract for it, but sow it of their own accord, over and above what they settle for by agreement.

High lands require more cultivation than low lands, twelve ploughings (*barah chas*) being necessary. On low lands only six are given, while land from which a *tori* crop has been taken does not receive more than four ploughings. Weeding commences in April, and consists in removing only the larger weeds or young plants of the *jhau tree* (*Tamarix dioica*). When the earlier sowings are 3 to 4 feet high, the plant is cut, leaving about half

a foot still standing, in the hope of obtaining second and third cuttings from it. The first cuttings are called *murhan,* and the others *khunti.* In the south of the district indigo sometimes stands six and eight feet high before it is cut.

MANUFACTURE.

The manufacture of indigo, which is called *muhai,* begins in June, the first process being the steeping of the plant in water in order to extract by fermentation the colouring principle of the plant. The plant is brought from the fields in small bundles, called *pulas* which are closely stacked in rectangular steeping vats built of strong brickwork faced inside with Portland cement. The capacity of these vats varies from 1,000 to 1,500 cubic feet, the latter size taking about 600 *pulas,* 18 inches in diameter, of "first cuttings" to fill. The bundles are arranged in two layers in the steeping vats, the lower layer being placed upright with the branches pointing upwards, whilst the upper layer rests on the first in an inverted position, so that the best leaf is massed in the middle of the vat. Occasionally, when the plant is small, a third layer of bundles, laid on their sides, is inserted between the other two. A number of stout bamboos are then laid parallel to one another over the topmost layer. On the bamboos, and at right angles, to them, are fixed strong beams or rails, which prevent the plants from rising over the sides of the vats when they swell during fermentation. The next process is to pump water into the steeping vats, with as little delay as possible after the bundles have been stacked; otherwise the plant is apt to generate heat and "burn", as the resultant blackening of the leaf is technically termed. The water is obtained either directly from a river or tank, or in the first instance is collected in large masonry reservoirs, from which it is pumped or run into the vats as required. The latter method is preferred. as it admits of a rough filteration and gives time for the suspended impurities to settle below the level of the surface water. The temperature of water in reservoirs is also raised by the sun's heat appreciably higher than in tanks or rivers.

The steeping vats being filled with water, the compressed plant is allowed to ferment from ten to twelve hours, but in cold damp weather fifteen to eighteen hours are necessary. As it is important that the plant should not be oversteeped, various tests are observed to ascertain when fermentation is complete. The three best known are the following:—(1) During fermentation bubbles of hydrogenous gases come to the surface and are easily ignited on the application of a lighted match; but when this process has run its full course, a non-inflammable gas, carbonic

dioxide, is given off by the submerged plant. (2) The temperature of the vat continues to rise until the climax of fermentation has been attained, when it immediately begins to decrease (3) The level of the surface of the liquor in the vats rises until fermentation ceases, when it begins to fall slowly To the experienced eye, however, the general appearance of the steeping vat is sufficient indication when the liquor, containing the dye in solution, should be drawn off, through drain holes placed on a level with the floor of the vat, and allowed to pour into the "beater vat," in which machinery is employed

The beater vat, which is also built of brickwork, is generally long and shallow, divided along the greater part of its length into three compartments by two parallel walls, which leave spaces at both ends for the free circulation of the current Butler's wheel, driven by portable steam engines, is the favourite form of beating machinery. The result of this process is to oxidise the clear greenish liquor by the influence of atmospheric air, from which oxygen is absorved, and particles or "grains", as they are termed, of indigo colouring matter are separated During the beating, the carbon dioxide previously present in the liquid is set free, and forms on the surface, in conjunction with air bubbles, a deep blue forth, which disappears as the oxidization is completed or is reduced by a little rape-seed oil being sprinkled over it In minor factories, in which steam power is not in use, coolies are employed to beat with paddles or *pharuas,* at first slowly and gently and afterwards more quickly and strongly. Eight to fourteen men are required for each vat according to its size

As the froth subsides, the grains of indigo begin to precipitate themselves, leaving a clear supernatant liquid; and in three to four hours they have completely settled. The clear water above is then drawn off and allowed to run into the waste drains, leaving at the bottom of the beater vat a thick sediment of indigo colouring matter, called *mal* and technically termed the "fecula". This is passed into the fecula vat, and thence pumped without much delay into boilers It is only in the boilers that any attempt is made at refining or cleansing. The grains of indigo, which when once formed are insoluble in water, are washed with clean warm water, which after a second subsidence is run off carrying with it vegetable matter and other impurities. This operation is repeated as often as time will allow.

The boiled fecula is next taken on to a trough or "table", as it is technically termed, on which is stretched a strong cloth supported by a kind of trellis-work. On this cloth the fecula is deposited by repeatedly returning the liquor that has passed

through the cloth into the trough, until the liquor draining through the cloth appears of a straw or sherry colour with an entire absence of a blue tint. It is then allowed to flow into the waste drain, and the fecula deposited on the cloth in the trough—which by this time has the consistency of jelly—is collected and put into rectangular press-boxes made of wood with numerous holes on all sides for letting out surplus water. The boxes are first lined with stout cloth and then filled with fecula, after which pressure is applied by means of lever-presses. After the indigo in the press-boxes has undergone pressure for about eight to twelve hours, and the slabs of indigo feel hard to the touch, the press boxes are dismantled, and the slabs cut into small cubes, which are put into the drying godown on shelves. The godown is kept more or less dark so as to prevent too rapid drying which is apt to crack and splinter the cakes. In November and December, when the cakes are thoroughly dry, they are packed into mango wood chests, containing on an average about 4½ to 4 maunds of indigo, and forwarded to Calcutta for sale.

Indigo Seed Growing.

In conclusion, a special branch of the indigo industry may be mentioned, viz., that of growing indigo seed for sale. This was formerly practised on a large scale, but is now practically extinct, though it has recently been taken up again at the Gokul nagar factory. It is described as follows in *Sport and Work on the Nepal Frontier*, by James Inglis (Maori).—"Besides indigo planting proper, there is another large branch of industry in north Bhagalpur and along the Nepal Frontier there, and in Purnea, namely, the growing of indigo seed for the Bengal planters. The system of advance, and the mode of cultivation is much the same as that followed in indigo planting proper. The seed is sown in June or July, is weeded and tended all through the rains, and cut in December. The planters advance about four rupees a *bigha* to the *ryot*, who cuts his seed plant, and brings it into the factory threshing-ground, where it is beaten out, cleaned, weighed, and packed in bags. When the seed has been threshed out and cleaned; it is weighed, and the *ryot* or cultivator gets four rupees for every maund. The previous advance is deducted. The rent or loan account is adjusted, and the balance made over in cash. Others grow the seed on their own account, without taking advances, and bring it to the factory for sale".

GLOSSARY.

Abwabs	...	Illegal impositions on the tenants in addition to the actual rent.
Adalat	...	Civil Court.
Adhyapak	...	Teacher.
Aghani	...	Crops in month of *Agrahayan* corresponding to December; generally refers to paddy harvested in winter.
Ahimsa	...	Non-violence.
Akhara	...	A gymnasium or centre where people take exercises.
Aman	...	Winter paddy.
Amlas	...	Employees for rent collection.
Anchal	...	Unit of revenue administration below subdivisional level and above the *halka* level An *Anchal* has about ten to twelve *halkas* and each *halka* comprises ten to twelve villages.
Anchal Adhikari	...	Incharge of an *Anchal* to the rank of a Sub-Deputy Collector or Deputy Collector.
Arhatdar	...	A wholesale merchant.
Arwa	...	Rice husked from unboiled paddy.
Aus	...	A kind of paddy which is harvested just at the close of the monsoon.
Bakast	...	Land in the cultivating possession of a proprietor or a tenure-holder.
Bandh	...	Embankment.
Bania	...	A shopkeeper, often used to denote the caste of shopkeepers.
Batai	...	The share of the crop for a person who cultivates another's land.
Bataidars	...	Share croppers.
Bazar	...	Market.
Bepari	...	Trader.
Bhadai	...	Autumn rice.
Bhajan	...	Religious song; hymn.
Bhaji	...	Spinach; vegetables in general.

Bhang	..	An intoxicant.
Bidri	..	Delicate carving work on metal articles.
Bigha	..	It is a unit of the measure of area of the land and it varies from place to place.
Biri	..	A kind of indigenous cigarette containing tobacco wrapped in leaves.
Burka	...	Veil.
Chachar	...	Land that has been left fallow.
Chamain	...	A woman belonging to the Chamar caste. She usually performs the duties of a midwife.
Charkha	...	Spinning wheel.
Chars	...	Newly formed lands on river-beds.
Chowkidar	...	Watchman.
Chowkis	...	Police out-posts.
Chura	...	Flattened rice.
Cutchery	...	Court.
Dais	...	Maid-servants.
Dal	...	Party.
Dal	...	Pulses.
Dalal	...	Tout; broker.
Dan	...	Gift.
Darogah	...	A Sub-Inspector of Police or Excise.
Darwan	...	Gate-keeper.
Dhaincha	...	A plant used as green manure.
Dhangars	...	Bonded employees; servants.
Dhar	...	Current, a new course of a river.
Dharmáshala	...	Rest house for travellers.
Diara	...	Sandy stretches thrown out on the river-bed.
Diwan	...	A high revenue official.
Diwani	...	Civil court; finance and general administration.
Ekka	...	A light one-pony drawn carriage with a flat seat for four or more passengers besides the driver to sit. This was the usual conveyance in the towns and in the rural areas but this type of conveyance is fast declining in the urban areas. Previously the horses used to be given flashy trappings and trinkets and there used to be *Ekka*-races a favourite pastime. In *Satuani* festival time this race is still held.
Fakirs	...	Wandering Muslim mendicants.
Faujdars	...	Military Governors.

Ganja	...	An intoxicant.
Gasban Kabja	...	Illegal possession through force.
Ghat	...	A landing place; ferry or pass.
Gola	...	Grocery centre.
Gosain	...	Priest.
Goshala	...	An institution for maintaining old and decrepit cows.
Gur	...	Jaggery.
Gurus	...	Teachers.
Haldi	...	Turmeric.
Harem	...	The apartment exclusive for ladies
Harikirtan	...	A congregation of people singing *Bhajans* (hymns) to gods.
Hartal	...	Strike; Cessation of work on protest.
Hat	...	Market.
Hatia	...	Market.
Istimrari	...	Permanent.
Jagir	...	Lands held free of rent as grants
Jama	...	Total rental
Jamabandi	...	A record in which the entry of rental, etc., are maintained.
Jamun	..	Blackberry.
Jasta	...	Zinc.
Jheel	...	Water reservoir; a water-pool.
Jyotish	...	Astrology.
Kabil lagan Khata	...	Plots unassessed but capable of bearing rent.
Kaharin	...	A *Kahar* woman, usually a maid-servant.
Kaju	...	Cashew-nut
Kamdar	...	A servant employed in agricultural work.
Kamia	...	Agricultural labourer, usually bonded.
Kans	...	A kind of wild grass.
Kanungo	...	A minor government official in revenue administration.
Karamchari	...	A Government servant engaged in rent collection in rural areas.
Kathal	...	Jack-fruit.
Kathas	...	Legends or stories associated with religion either in verses or in prose usually recited in assemblies.

Kauri	...	A large genus of gasteropods used among primitive people as money. It was used as such in rural Bihar till the first decade of the 20th century.
Kaviraji	...	Indigenous science of medicine.
Khalasi	...	A helper employed in running machinery.
Khanapuri	...	Final preparation of *Khatian*.
Khas mahal	...	A section in the Collectorate that used to look after areas under personal management of the State. Since abolition of *Zamindari* this section has merged in Land Reforms Section.
Khansama	..	Servant.
Khatian	..	A record of names of tenants in a village or town and description of land owned by them.
Kheer	..	Rice boiled in thickened milk and sweetened with sugar.
Kirtan	..	A congregation of people singing hymns to gods.
Kisan	...	Peasant.
Kisan Sabha	...	A political organisation of the peasants.
Kothis	...	Usually connected with indigo plantations, bungalow in the midst of the factory lands
Lathi	...	A thick stick.
Madrasa	...	Institution for higher studies.
Mahal	...	A unit in an estate.
Mahajans	...	Village money-lenders.
Maida	...	Well-sieved flour.
Majhi	...	Boatman.
Makai	...	Maize.
Maktab	...	Primary school.
Mali	...	Gardener.
Malik	...	Proprietor.
Mantras	...	Hymns.
Marwa	...	An essential ceremony of a Hindu marriage in Bihar, the site where a Hindu marriage is performed.
Maulvi	...	One well-versed in Arabic language; a teacher; an appellation for Muslims in general.
Melas	...	Fairs.
Mohar	...	Gold coin.
Moong	...	A kind of cereal.
Motwalli	...	Trustee in *Waqf* Estate.

Mukhiya ... Elected executive head of a *Gram Panchayat*.

Mulki tamadi ... Rent barred by limitation.

Mullah ... A Muslim well-versed in Muslim law and theology.

Murhi ... Fried rice.

Mustajirs ... Lease-holders; land-holders.

Nawanya ... A festival marking a harvest.

Nazar ... An offering as a mark of respect.

Nilgai ... Blue bull.

Pag ... Turban.

Palki ... Palanquin.

Pan ... Betel.

Pandit ... One who is learned in the language, science, laws, and religion of India; any learned man; a teacher.

Panches ... Members of *Panchayat*.

Pansi ... A kind of boat.

Parauti ... Land left fallow for a time that may be sufficient to recover its fertility.

Parchas ... Copy of entries in the *Khatian* given to tenants.

Parganas ... Fiscal units consisting of a number of villages.

Pathsala ... A primary school.

Patni ... A kind of tenure; a perpetual lease.

Patti ... Ownership.

Patwari ... Old time servants of landlords who collected rents and kept accounts.

Peshakash ... Quit-rent; present.

Phatka ... A business in which commodities are bought and sold without their passing from hand to hand speculative deals.

Polaj .. Lands continuously cultivated and never allowed to lie fallow.

Pooja ... Prayer.

Pucca ... Brick built.

Purdah ... A social custom where women do not appear before the men without a veil.

Rabi ... Spring crops like wheat, gram, linseed, etc.

Rowannah ... A kind of passport.

Ryots ... Tenants.

Saise	...	A man who grooms the horse.
San	...	A kind of hemp used in preparing strings.
Sanad	...	Certificate.
Sardars	...	Leaders.
Sarkar	...	Government; an honorific address.
Sarpanch	...	Elected judicial head of a *Gram Panchayat*.
Sarvodaya	...	Greatest good to the greatest number.
Sannyasis	...	Mendicants.
Sattu	...	Flour ground out of fried grains.
Satyagraha	...	Movement.
Sepahi	...	Constable; soldier; persons employed on pseudo-military duties by landlords.
Shampani	...	A covered vehicle with flat bottom drawn by two bullocks. This conveyance was much used by landlords and rich people till the early part of the 20th century.
Shikari	...	Hunter.
Sowars	...	Horsemen; jockeys.
Sraddha	...	The social ceremony held a number of days after the death of a person.
Sriman	...	Headman.
Subah	...	Province.
Subedar	...	Governor.
Suji	...	Coarse-ground wheat.
Swadeshi	...	Indigenous.
Tahlus	...	Servants.
Tahesildar	...	Rent Collector.
Taluk	...	Estate.
Tapparwala	...	Roofed.
Tappu	...	A fiscal unit smaller than *Parganas*.
Tarkari	...	Vegetable.
Tatti	...	A wall made of straw and bamboo splinters.
Tattoos	...	Ponies.
Terai	...	Valley.
Thanas	...	Police-stations.
Ticca ghari	...	Hackney carriage.
Ulu	...	A kind of grass.
Unani	...	An indigenous science of medicine originating from Greece.

Usna	...	Rice husked from boiled paddy.
Vaidya	...	A physician following indigenous system of medicine.
Waqf	...	Property set apart for religious or public purposes.
Zamindars	...	Landlords.
Zanana	...	Portion of buildings set apart for ladies.
Zulum	...	Tyranny.

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